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**Ancient Greek folksong tradition  
begging, work, and ritual song**

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# **Ancient Greek Folksong Tradition**

## **Begging, Work, and Ritual Song**

by

Antonio Genova

A Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in Classics

King's College London

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## Abstract

This dissertation investigates whether and in what sense the concept of folksong can be applied to the ancient Greek texts. The starting point is a new conceptualisation that clarifies that ‘folksong’ is not a category of form but is a category determined by occasion, use and consumption. In light of this methodological and theoretical framework, some of the texts included in the modern collection of the *carmina popularia* (PMG 847-883) are examined. These texts are printed together with a revised critical apparatus, translation, and comparanda.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the conceptual and cultural origins of folklore and folksong and describes the inadequacies of a romantically-inclined approach which considers folk songs according to preconceived contexts of origin and production. To rectify this scholarly bias, a new conceptualisation of folksong is delineated. This conceptualisation defines the genre of folksong not by looking at what types of texts are sung and by whom, but by establishing how certain songs are used and perceived in their performative contexts. In the chapters to follow, this approach and conceptualisation is extended to the specific analysis of some ancient Greek texts included in the *carmina popularia*. Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 focus on the begging-song (PMG 848) and work-song (PMG 849 and 869) traditions of ancient Greece respectively. Finally, Chapter 4 examines the folkloric status of a series of cult and ritual songs (PMG 847, 851, 854, 860, 862, 864, 868, 870, 871).

This dissertation challenges the view of the ancient Greek folksong tradition as a set (or subset) of texts which are to be distinguished *a priori* from literature and literary texts on the basis of preconceived contexts of origin and composition and absolute criteria of sophistication. On the contrary, it clarifies that the category of folksong depends on how certain texts are used and perceived in their (everyday) contexts of performance.

## Acknowledgements

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## Sigla codicum

The codices I have inspected myself by means of photographs are marked with an asterisk.

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### Athenaeus

- \* **A** = *Venetus Marcianus* gr. 447, X saec.
- \* **B** = *Laurentianus* plut. 60,1, XV saec.
- \* **C** = *Parisinus* suppl. gr. 841, XV saec. ex.
- D** = *Parisinus* gr. 3056, anni 1482.
- \* **E** = *Laurentianus* plut. 60, anni 1490 ca.
- M** = *Londinensis* Old Royal 16 C XXIV, XV-XVI saec.
- P** = *Palatinus* gr. 47, anni 1505-6.
- Q** = *Parisinus* gr. 1833 (ll. III-IX), XVI saec.?
- F** = *Bodleianus* Holkham 104, ?
- \* **Ambr.** = *Ambrosianus* L 118 sup. (ll. III-IX) + D 106 sup. (ll. X-XV), XV saec.

### Eustathius

- L** = *Laurentianus* plut. 59,2-3, XII saec.
- M** = *Venetus Marcianus* gr. 460, XII saec.
- P** = *Parisinus* gr. 2702, XII saec.

### Lucianus

- $\Gamma$  = *Vaticanus* gr. 90, X saec.
- E** = *Harleiani* 5694 pars superstes, X saec.
- $\Phi$  = *Laurentiani* Conv. Soppr. 77 partes vetustae, X saec.
- $\Omega$  = *Marciani* 840 (olim 434) pars vetusta, X/XI saec.

### Plutarchus (*Vitae parallelae*)

- G** = *Coislinianus* 319, X saec.
- L** = *Laurentianus* plut. 69,6, X saec.

### Plutarchus (*Moralia*)

- X** = *Venetus Marcianus* gr. 250, X saec.
- G** = *Vaticanus Barberinianus* gr. 182, X/XI saec.
- D** = *Parisinus* gr. 1956, XI saec.
- M** = *Mosquensis* Mus. Hist. Syn. gr. 352, XI saec.
- Y** = *Venetus Marcianus* gr. 249, XI saec.

- W** = *Vindobonensis* phil. gr. 129, XII saec.
- P** = *Patavinus* Bibl. Univ. 560 + *Palatinus* gr. 153, XII/XIII saec.
- J** = *Ambrosianus* C 195 inf. (gr. 881), XIII saec.
- Q** = *Athous Doch.* 268, XIV saec.
- R** = *Mazarinianus* 4458, XIV saec.
- S** = *Vaticanus* gr. 264, XIV saec.
- Z** = *Venetus Marcianus* gr. 511, XIV saec.
- K** = *Vaticanus* gr. 1309, XIV/XV saec.
- B** = *Parisinus* gr. 1675, anni 1430 ca.
- \* **d** = *Laurentianus* plut. 56,2, XV saec.
- h** = *Londinensis* Harley 5612, XV saec.
- \* **i** = *Laurentianus* plut. 56,4, XV saec.
- \* **κ** = *Laurentianus* plut. 80,5, XIV saec.
- v** = *Leidensis Vossianus* gr. Q 2, XV saec.



## Chapter 1: What is folksong?

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### 1.0 Introduction

The present dissertation aims to investigate a selection of the ancient Greek folksong tradition. The core of my entire discussion are the modern collections of the so-called *carmina popularia* (PMG 847-883). However, preliminary clarification concerning the notion of folksong (and that of *carmen popolare*) – the latter being a creation of modern scholars of Greek lyric poetry – is first of all needed. To begin with, ‘folksong’, and similar terms such as ‘folk poetry’, are often used to indicate a particular category of texts, without a proper definition of the terms.<sup>1</sup> On the one hand, the word *carmen* (or ‘song’ in the term ‘folk song’) generally denotes a set of words that are sung, recited or chanted.<sup>2</sup> I will be interested in this sense of the word ‘song’ in the present work, and so I include within my working definition any kind of song, extending from larger or smaller compositions to very short refrains, which are orally performed, with or without the accompaniment of music or other sounds.<sup>3</sup> In turn, a song may be considered ‘poetry’, if only by virtue of the fact that ‘the term “song” is often used interchangeably with “poem” in the sense of a lyric’.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The assertion of Croce (1933: 1) remains valid today: ‘Nella moltissima “letteratura” che tratta della poesia popolare, accade d’incontrare non di rado la confessione e l’ammissione: che è bensì facile parlare di “poesia popolare”, e più o meno intendersi circa le opere che le appartengono, ma assai difficile “definirla”.’ Similarly on the broader notion of ‘popular culture’ (see §1.1), cf. Parker (2011: 147): ‘We may not be able to define it, but we know it when we see it.’

<sup>2</sup> My definition of ‘song’ goes beyond what is understood in a vernacular sense as ‘song’, a usage which generally refers to a melodic line in the utterance. Moreover, I adopt a broader view of ‘lyric’ that focusses on performance and performative occasion for metrical verse, and goes as far as to include, for example, the παρακαταλογία of iambi (see Rotstein 2010), as well as the recitative mode of performance that might have been commonplace for epic (cf. e.g. West 1981), with an absence or at least a reduction of melody. On the term ‘lyric’ and its (ancient and modern) meanings, see Budelmann 2009: 2-5.

<sup>3</sup> Obviously, the performance of songs may include other important aspects such as music and dance. In turn, folk song or folk poetry may include folk music and folk dance. However, these complementary aspects cannot be specifically discussed in the present work. On folk music in ancient Greece, cf. e.g. Baud-Bovy 1983 and Rocconi 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Finnegan 1977: 13. On the conceptual relationship of ‘song’ and ‘poetry’ in ancient Greece, see Nagy 1990: 17-21. While ancient critics discovered poetry in the form of song (cf. §1.2.1.i), in contemporary debate we are likewise re-discovering song as a form of poetry. See e.g. the public discussion arisen after the singer-songwriter Bob Dylan was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2016, above all for his musical compositions. On the broad question ‘What is poetry?’ cf. also Finnegan 1977: 24-28.

On the other hand, it is the reference to ‘folk’ and the ‘popular’ element (*carmen popolare*) in the terms laid out above that interest me most and that require clearer definition. Thus in this opening chapter, I want to clarify in what sense songs can be considered characteristically ‘folk’. In the first section (§1.1), I shall provide a synoptic discussion of the methodological and theoretical issues concerning the concepts of folklore and, more specifically, folksong. In the second section (§1.2), I shall turn to undertake a review of the collection of the *carmina popularia*, in order to analyse the implications of the modern conceptualisations of the notion of folksong for interpretation of the ancient Greek texts. In the third and final section (§1.3), I shall propose a new definition and approach to interpreting folksong in (although by no means exclusively to) ancient Greece. This definition and approach will be useful in tackling some of the methodological and interpretative issues related to the modern concept of folksong, and both will accordingly be essential in advancing our understanding of the ancient Greek folksong tradition.

### **1.1 Popular culture, folklore, and folksong**

A terminological clarification is needed from the outset. When speaking of folklore, we may also think of the related concept of popular culture. The first parts of the respective phrases, ‘folk’ and ‘popular’, are often used interchangeably, so that concepts such as ‘folk culture’, ‘folksong’, and ‘folk poetry’, on the one hand, and ‘popular culture’, ‘popular song’, and ‘popular poetry’, on the other, are sometimes seen as mere synonyms. However, for the purposes of the present study, I consider it beneficial to draw a distinction between ‘folk’ and ‘popular’, and to prefer, therefore, the term ‘folksong’ to ‘popular song’ throughout.<sup>5</sup> The reason for this lies in the fact that ‘folk’ is specifically related to a field of study (i.e. folklore) that is of especial interest in the present thesis. The cultural roots of the notion of ‘folklore’ (and ‘folksong’) reach back to the end of the eighteenth century, and have since then opened

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<sup>5</sup> This distinction is already present in other contexts. Cf. e.g. Yatromanolakis (2009: 264 n. 9): ‘Outside classics, “popular song” is often distinguished from “folk song” by the former category’s recurrent associations with some kind of “professionalism”.’ The author is likely to be referring to the distinction between anonymous, traditional song and authorial pop song (cf. also Sims–Stephens 2011: 3f.). For obvious linguistic reasons, ‘popular’ remains the preferred or the only alternative in e.g. Italian (‘canto popolare’ or ‘poesia popolare’), as well as in the Latin translation *carmina popularia*, by which we usually identify the ancient Greek folk songs. The use in Modern Greek varies between δημοτικά (‘folk’) and λαϊκά (‘popular’) τραγούδια.

up new perspectives for the study of folk culture, even in pre-modern societies.<sup>6</sup> By that period, the first collections of *carmina popularia* (i.e. ancient Greek folk songs) began to be assembled (cf. §1.2). On the other hand, the term ‘popular’ may refer to a broader range of definitions, categorisations and perceptions, in which folklore represents only one aspect, albeit a very important one.<sup>7</sup> For instance, ‘popular’ may also denote, more specifically, the notion of ‘mass culture’ (or ‘culture industry’), with its modern connotations of mass production, which do not find application in pre-modern cultures. Hence, it has also been suggested that popular culture in modern Western society is always equated with ‘mass culture’, whereas popular culture in pre-industrial societies is overlapping with ‘folk culture’.<sup>8</sup>

Folklore and popular culture are intellectual categories, by the means of which modern scholarship seeks to describe and interpret the culture from which certain (dominant) social groups distance themselves.<sup>9</sup> These notions may or may not coincide with each other, because they are often used for exploring different issues from different perspectives and with different

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<sup>6</sup> Burke 2009 still represents one of the most extensive examples of analysing popular culture in a pre-modern society (viz. Early Modern Europe, ca. 1500-1800). As regards the study of popular culture in the Greek and Roman worlds, see e.g. Anderson 2006; Lelli 2014: 19-40; Grig 2017. The conceptual difficulties in tracking down an unambiguous and diachronically valid definition of popular culture are even more evident here: ‘we should probably posit for the ancient world conditions akin to those described by Peter Burke in his account of popular culture in early modern Europe (1500-1800), where “popular culture” is itself a misnomer’ (Kurke 2011: 7).

<sup>7</sup> Following Tony Bennet and John Storey, Parker (2011: 147-158) offers a synoptic discussion of six of the most important definitions of, and approaches to, popular culture (among which ‘folk culture’), ‘each with its own strengths and difficulties, each bringing with it a slightly different set of objects for contemplation as “popular”’ (p. 148). On the various interpretations of ‘popular culture’, cf. also Storey 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Parker 2011: 152 with n. 34. See also §1.1.2. The two categories (folk culture and mass culture) may be implied in the concise summary of Chartier (1995: 83): ‘Risking extreme simplification, one can reduce the innumerable definitions of popular culture to two great descriptive and interpretative models. The first, aiming to abolish all forms of cultural ethnocentrism, conceives of popular culture as a coherent and autonomous symbolic system that function according to a logic absolutely foreign to those of literate culture. The second, concerned with emphasizing that relations of domination that organize the social world, perceives popular culture in its dependencies and deficiencies with respect to the dominant culture. On one side, then, popular culture [*scil.* folklore] constitutes a world apart, closed on itself, independent. On the other, popular culture [*scil.* mass culture] is completely defined by its distance from a cultural legitimacy of which it is deprived.’

<sup>9</sup> As neatly expressed by Chartier (1995: 83), ‘Popular culture is a category of the learned.’ Cf. e.g. also Bronzini (1980:18): ‘Come entità reale la cultura popolare non esiste, è una finzione classistica e letteraria’, as well as Grig (2017: 3): “‘popular culture’ (like “elite culture”) is, of course, a *construct* rather than a self-evident reality.’

methodological tools. When adopting the various notions of popular culture, historicisation and contextualisation are thus imperative. To avoid confusion, I will adopt in the present discussion the terminology drawn from the formal study of folklore's history and traditions. In this first subsection, I shall examine the original theorisation (§1.1.1), and thereafter trace the conceptual developments of (§1.1.2), the notions of folklore and, more importantly, of folksong. Disentangling the various concepts and approaches in question is no easy task that can aim for completeness in the present work. Nonetheless, a brief engagement with them will be necessary, in order to clearly define the new perspectives from which I am going to analyse folksong in ancient Greece.

### 1.1.1 The discovery of folklore and folksong

The writer and antiquarian William John Thoms coined the term 'folklore' in 1846.<sup>10</sup> However, the origins of this interpretative category date back to the end of the eighteenth century and were rooted in the *Sturm und Drang* movement.<sup>11</sup> In this intellectual milieu, earlier German concepts, such as *Volkslied* ('folksong'), *Volkssage* ('folktale') and *Volkskunde* ('folklore'),<sup>12</sup> came into use to refer to what was initially a cultural venture, and what eventually came to denote both an academic discipline and the objects that such discipline aims to study.<sup>13</sup> With

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<sup>10</sup> See Finnegan (1977: 35): 'Will Thoms wrote a letter to *The Athenaeum* proposing a new name for what had hitherto been called "Popular Antiquities" or "Popular Literature": "Your pages have so often given evidence of the interest which you take in what we in England designate as Popular Antiquities, or Popular Literature (though by-the-bye it is more a Lore than a Literature, and would be most aptly described by a good Saxon compound, Folklore, – *the Lore of the People*) – that I am not without hopes of enlisting your aid in garnering the few ears which are remaining, scattered over that field from which our forefathers might have gathered a goodly crop" (Thoms, 1846, p. 862).'

<sup>11</sup> On the birth of folklore and the concepts underlying its formation, see Finnegan 1977: 30-41; Bronzini 1980: 53-80; Cocchiara 1981; Storey 2003: 1-10; Dick 2005; Burke 2009: 23-48. In Dundes 2005, which contains Dick's article (originally published in 1989), one may find many useful essays, which range in date from 1861 to 2001 and which deal with important theories and concepts in folklore studies.

<sup>12</sup> For these and other terms, see Burke 2009: 23.

<sup>13</sup> In this sense, folklore can denote the study of folksong, folktale, folk music, folk science, folk art, and so on. In the Anglophone tradition, other terms have been utilised to indicate folklore as an academic discipline: e.g. folkloristics (North America), tradition studies and folklife studies (Britain). At any rate, the English term 'folklore' has become established across Europe, with some obvious exceptions (cf. e.g. modern Greek λαογραφία). Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, terminological alternatives were proposed, such as the Italian *demopsicologia* and *demologia* (cf. Lelli 2014: 21), or the French *traditionnisme*, but without prevailing success.

his writings and his own collections of folk songs (*Volkslieder*), Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) can be considered an outstanding forerunner of this cultural orientation.<sup>14</sup> His formulation of the opposition between *Kultur des Volkes* ('folk culture') and *Kultur der Gelehrten* ('learned culture')<sup>15</sup> still pervades contemporary perceptions of folklore. By 1815, the new positions and most of their formative concepts were fully developed, and one of the most successful collections of 'folk literature', the fairy-tales of the brothers Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, had been published (1812-1815).<sup>16</sup> This 'discovery of the people'<sup>17</sup> poses many challenging questions which are worth discussing here. We might, for example, wonder why the interest in the people became fashionable at this particular point in European history, what cultural influences the intellectuals of the time drew upon, and who exactly were 'the people' (the folk, or *Volk*) at stake.

In its earliest beginnings, the discovery of folk culture constituted an integral part of early Romantic views about 'nation'. Only later, and more dramatically in some areas than in others, was this discovery closely associated with the emerging and parallel phenomenon of nationalism. Crucial, for example, were the implications of Giambattista Vico's thought on the construction of history, as expressed above all in his major work *La Scienza Nuova*. Here is a summary of his thought (see Dick 2005: 60):

History, in Vico's view, is no longer understood in terms of a grand theological scheme, it is a creation of man. But he did not mean the great men who made history according to traditional historiography, but rather the collective spirit, the national genius of individual nations.

On this view, 'a collective personality on a national scale' seems to emerge, and more importantly, 'the people assumed the role of a cultural force of first-order'.<sup>18</sup> Vico's new understanding of history itself not only represented a methodological guideline for later

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. e.g. Dick 2005: 62-66. The first edition of Herder's collection of folksongs was published in two parts in 1778 and 1779 under the title *Volkslieder*. The second edition, entitled *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern*, was published posthumously by his wife Caroline in 1807. On the troubled publication history of Herder's collections, see Oergel 2006: 53 n. 76.

<sup>15</sup> See Burke 2009: 30 and 47.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. e.g. Dick 2005: 69-74.

<sup>17</sup> An expression borrowed from Burke 2009.

<sup>18</sup> Dick 2005: 61.

Romantic historians, but also influenced philosophers and literary critics like Herder.<sup>19</sup> As a result, the *vox populi* (or *Stimmen der Völker*)<sup>20</sup> came to represent the voice of a nation. To quote Burke (2009: 30f.), ‘what is new in Herder and the Grimms and their followers is, first, the emphasis on the people, and second, their belief that “manners, customs, observances, superstitions, ballads, proverbs etc.” were all part of a whole, expressing the spirit of a particular nation.’ Not surprisingly, the emergent folk culture was also intended to encourage a more collective and crystallised national consciousness. Collections of folk songs and fairy-tales, for example, served as symbols of popular self-definition and national liberation for minority and despised groups.<sup>21</sup> At the same time, this association between folk culture and nationalism was gradual, and its political significance was far from uniform in each European country.<sup>22</sup> In brief, the idea of nationhood, and the growth of European nationalism, represented two important features of folklore throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>23</sup>

Alongside and interconnected with these political motivations, the idea of primitivism was another intellectual force that contributed to the birth and development of Romantic-era folklore. Romanticism was characterised by, among other things, a ‘dissatisfaction with the current state of the world and a deep yearning for something else’ (Finnegan 1977: 33). This typical dissatisfaction was primarily caused by the impact of industrialisation and mechanisation, causing an alternative to be sought and found in the exotic, the wild, and the natural, that is to say, in the primitive. Without doubt, the movement of cultural primitivism and its aesthetic appeal owed intellectual debts to the theories of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the so-called ‘myth of the noble savage’.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, primitivism was itself part of the Romantic ‘reaction against the Enlightenment [...]; against its elitism, against its rejection of

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<sup>19</sup> On Vico’s indirect influence of Herder, see Dick 2005: 62f.

<sup>20</sup> This is the title of the second edition of Herder’s collection of folk songs (cf. *supra* n. 14).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Storey 2003: 2-6. On the specific case of the Modern Greek folksong tradition, see Beaton 1980: 4-12.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Burke 2009: 34-38.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. also Dundes (1980: 1f.): ‘Closely tied to currents of romanticism and nationalism, the serious study of folklore found an enthusiastic audience among individuals who felt nostalgia for the past and/or the necessity of documenting the existence of national consciousness or identity. By the last decade of the nineteenth century, national folklore societies had been formed in Europe and the United States: among them, the Finnish Literature Society, 1831; the English Folk-Lore Society, 1878; and the American Folklore Society, 1888.’

<sup>24</sup> Cf. e.g. Finnegan 1977: 31f.; Bronzini 1980: 56-58; Dick 2005: 64f.

tradition, against its stress on reason'.<sup>25</sup> Within such a cultural background, Herder and his followers did not restrict themselves to extolling the virtues of primitive man as an idealised model for the entirety of humanity. They also pinpointed the fragmented remains of a longed-for, lost, prehistoric world in the beliefs and practices of the folk, especially in the peasantry, which was thought to survive in primitive rural isolation.<sup>26</sup> In their living close to nature, peasants were supposed to preserve primitive customs, which had been handed on unchanged for thousands of years.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, those primitive traditions, of which the folk-peasants were considered the true keepers, were raised to represent cultural models for an entire nation.<sup>28</sup> In this sense, the study of folklore – national epics, ballads, and local stories – was essential for the educated and dominant classes, in order to reach back to the primordial springs of national identity, which they had once shared with the peasant order.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, industrialisation and mechanisation were increasingly perceived as a threat to this ancient and traditional native culture, and thus lent urgency to the need to salvage a still animate folk tradition.<sup>30</sup>

What implicitly emerges from these considerations is that the Romantic interrelation between the ideals of nation and primitivism was also reflected in – and crucial for the development of – the key concept of the *Volk*. The complexity that characterises the semantics of this term in Romantic thought cannot be overlooked, in order to fully understand who were the people at stake in the emergence of folk culture. Three main semantic categories can be

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<sup>25</sup> See Burke 2009: 34 ('The Grimms, for instance, prized tradition above reason, what grew naturally over what was consciously planned, the instincts of the people over the arguments of intellectuals').

<sup>26</sup> In this sense, the folk par excellence were the peasants. Cf. Burke (2009: 57): 'For the discoverers of popular culture, the "people" were the peasants. The peasants formed between 80 per cent and 90 per cent of the population of Europe. It was their songs which Herder and his friends called "folksongs", their dances which were called "folkdances", their stories which were called "folktales".'

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Burke (2009: 31): '[T]he people were a mysterious Them, described in terms of everything their discoverers were not (or thought they were not): the people were natural, simple, illiterate, instinctive, irrational, rooted in tradition and in the soil of the region, lacking any sense of individuality (the individual was lost in the community).' On this 'primitivism' and 'purism' of the people-peasants, see Burke 2009: 46-48.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Burke (2009: 36): 'Ironically enough, the idea of a "nation" came from the intellectuals and was imposed on the "people" with whom they desired to identify. In 1800, craftsmen and peasants usually had a regional rather than a national consciousness.'

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Storey 2003: 6-10.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. e.g. Burke (2009: 40): 'The popular culture of the years around 1800 was found just in time, or so the discoverers thought. The theme of a vanishing culture which must be recorded before it is too late recurs in their writings, making them reminiscent of the concern with disappearing tribal societies today.'

pinpointed in the term *Volk*: 1) ‘the people as a nation’; 2) ‘the people belonging to a historical subdivision of a nation’; and 3) ‘the people of the lower classes, the governed class, the uneducated, etc. who [...] may be regarded as the common people’.<sup>31</sup> The third category, as seen above, was best represented by the peasant class. These categories were combined together into a single conceptual framework, as the result of a gradual process in which the notion of primitivism was determinant. The beginnings of this conceptual development can be observed in Herder’s usage of the term *Volk*:

A point of much greater consequence, however, is the shift of meaning in the direction of primitivism. In Herder’s usage, *Volk* can mean ‘a race or a nation that never advanced beyond primitive grades of culture’ [...]. It can also assume this semantic aspect with reference to a group *within* a civilized nation – ‘a group which has retained the primitivism just noted above’ [...]. In other words, the idea of primitivism functions as a pervasive concept that can supersede the established division of the semantics of *Volk* and practically redefine the understanding of the world in light of what must be considered a new ideal. This semantic shift is particularly noticeable in the upgrading – and eventual idealization – of the *Volk* as a social class. Given the new significance attached to the simple people, the folk, the terminological shift from *Nation* to *Volk* was only a matter of time [...], just as the social value implications were reversed and the culture of the common people, the folk, came to represent the cherished ideal of a new historical orientation.<sup>32</sup>

The combination of the meanings ‘nation’ and ‘social class’ in the understanding of *Volk* appears to be successfully accomplished in Jakob Grimm’s juxtaposition between ‘*Volkssagen, d.h. Nationalsagen*’ (‘folk tales, i.e. national tales’) and ‘*Volkssagen, d.h. des gemeinen Volks*’ (‘folk tales, i.e. [tales] of the common people’).<sup>33</sup> Even though the Grimms never referred explicitly to the rhetoric of primitivism, it is now clear that this juxtaposition is fully accounted for by the role primitivism played in the conceptual development of the term *Volk*.<sup>34</sup> The terminological shift from *Nation* to *Volk* was an achievement of the twentieth century, and the meaning of *Volk* as a social class has become prevalent ever since.

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<sup>31</sup> Dick 2005: 66.

<sup>32</sup> Dick 2005: 67.

<sup>33</sup> Dick 2005: 68.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Dick (2005: 68): ‘Grimm assumes a “simple course” of development, which amounts to a cultural transfer of the narrative heritage of one type of group to the other, namely from the whole of the nation to the



This short review of the nascent folklore tradition shows how the category of folklore was originally conceptualised in a tangled web of intellectual references, that was deeply tied to the dominant learned culture of the time. The ideals of nationhood and primitivism can of course be detected as two of the main cultural factors that had a dramatic impact on early Romantic folklore and the Romantic conceptualisation of *Volk*. Bearing this theoretical framework in mind, I shall now advance to examine the conceptual origins of the notion of folksong.

Folksong (and the related term folk poetry) may be rightfully considered the cornerstone of Romantic theory about folklore.<sup>35</sup> Its most influential theorisation is found in Herder's concepts of *Volkspoesie* and *Volkslied*.<sup>36</sup> Herder's discussion moves from eighteenth-century consideration of the origins of language and poetry, and Vico's (indirect) influence is once again found:

Herder's views on the origin of language match quite closely those developed by Vico in that they stress the metaphorical and songlike nature of original language and declare poetry to be the oldest form of human speech.<sup>37</sup>

In this primitive, unlettered poetic language, 'nature' acts as a primal force in opposition to 'art'. Poetry, and most especially the truest poetry, is to be understood essentially as spontaneous, artless and natural. On such a theoretical basis, the *Sturm und Drang* movement forged the notion of *Naturpoesie* as the only true and real poetry.<sup>38</sup> Herder upgrades this image, firstly by setting 'the concepts of nature, *Volk* and nation' in a close association with each other, and secondly by suggesting that 'social groups and their cultures are natural and original

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common people as a social class (in contrast to the educated class). In essence, this means that the nation's most cherished intellectual tradition had to "flee" to and find shelter among the common people, who, in this perspective appear as the true guardians of the tradition.'

<sup>35</sup> Obviously, not only folksong aroused the interest of the intellectuals of the time. The discovery of the people also included the discovery of other cultural forms, such as fairy tales, popular religion, popular festivals, folk music and folk art. See Burke 2009: 26-29.

<sup>36</sup> 'Equivalent words and phrases came into use in other countries, usually a little later than in Germany. Thus, *Volkslieder* were *folkviser* for the Swedes, *canti popolari* for the Italians, *narodnye pesni* for the Russians, *népdalok* for the Hungarians' (Burke 2009: 23).

<sup>37</sup> Dick 2005: 63 (cf. also pp. 61, 64). Generally on Herder's concept of *Volkspoesie*, see also Oergel 52-64; Burke 2009: 23f.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Finnegan 1977: 31-33; Bronzini 1980: 58.

entities'.<sup>39</sup> Firstly, Herder places the concept of *Volkspoesie* at the centre of a poetic ideal that aims to reconnect with the natural and original effectiveness once possessed by poetry. In Herder's view, primitive and true poetry possesses 'an immediate, sensuous vitality', a 'life-like concreteness that appeals directly to the senses, the hearth and the soul', and, for these reasons, it has 'a powerful impact on the imagination'.<sup>40</sup> All these positive qualities of naturalness are lost in the literature of his time, which is rather characterised by 'artifice, intellectualism, and decadence'.<sup>41</sup> Secondly, this reconnection with poetry's natural and original effectiveness is closely linked to what Herder considers the essence of humanity, i.e. the national and the local.<sup>42</sup> Herder suggests that 'the beautiful, the sublime and the ethical can only be effectively expressed for a human individual' in a national context, and through the medium of, among other things, national poems.<sup>43</sup> This means that only national poetry can be effective poetry, while international or supra-national poetry, which corresponds to contemporary poetry, proves to be potentially ineffective. Herder, therefore, pushes for a return to ancient models of national poetry, which are found, for example, in the poems of Hebrew, Greek, Roman and Germanic antiquity.<sup>44</sup> In light of this theoretical background, *Volkspoesie* comes to encompass the parallel concepts of *Naturpoesie* and *Nationalpoesie*. These three terms, with their implied meaning of effective, primitive poetry, and being opposed to *Kunstpoesie*, remain interchangeable until at least the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>45</sup> We find

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<sup>39</sup> Oergel 2006: 52.

<sup>40</sup> Oergel 2006: 53.

<sup>41</sup> Oergel 2006: 53.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Oergel 2006: 50-52.

<sup>43</sup> Oergel 2006: 59. Cf. also Dick 2005: 63 ('the *individuality of each people* that constitutes a distinct national and cultural identity was central to Herder's historical and anthropological views. He saw the creative genius of each nation as a metaphysical entity which expresses itself in language, folk literature and myth').

<sup>44</sup> See esp. Oergel 2006: 58-64. Two clarifications are needed. First, 'Herder is keen to make clear that he is no primitivist. Although he champions old models (and there are plenty of primitivist-sounding passages), he rather wishes to re-introduce their cultural structures, not their content or the culture they represent, into contemporary literary development' (Oergel 2006: 54). In other words, he 'is very much concerned with the value of the past for the present, not with the past for its own sake' (Oergel 2006: 55). Second, the national dimension of Herder's poetic ideal has little to do with the fact of growing nationalism. Cf. Oergel 2006: 58: 'The German national dimension is always present, but it remains one aspect of a generally modern problem. In Herder's reform programme, the national is crucially important, but universally.' The relationship between folksong and nationalism represents rather a later development, and concerns itself with only certain areas in particular.

<sup>45</sup> The Grimms first formed the polarity of *Naturpoesie* and *Kunstpoesie* (see Dick 2005: 70).

here the complex semantics of the term *Volk* illustrated above, in which the notions of common people, nation, and nature – this last term understood as primitive naturalness – meld together into a single conceptual framework.<sup>46</sup>

The layered semantic complex that underlies Herder's conceptualisation of *Volkspoesie* fully accounts for his choice to edit and entitle his collection of *Volkslieder*.<sup>47</sup> In this collection, Herder amassed and translated anonymously transmitted songs from many nations, some as remote as Latvia, Lapland, Greenland, or Peru. Yet, he also includes in his collection 'samples of the European literary tradition, such as poems by Goethe and earlier authors, as well as various pieces from Shakespeare's plays'.<sup>48</sup> In this multifarious assemblage, Herder implies, on the one hand, that 'in the post-Renaissance world, only folksong [*scil.* the songs composed by the people and for the people] retains the moral effectiveness of early poetry',<sup>49</sup> while on the other hand he also finds the *Volkspoesie* in Homer, Dante, Shakespeare and all great poets of the past.<sup>50</sup> By inverting the analogy, he thus suggests that all great poets are folk poets.<sup>51</sup> Herder's concept of *Volkspoesie*, therefore, manifests itself in two kinds of songs: not only 'the songs composed by the people and for the people', but also those songs that, regardless of their original composition, 'the people have adopted because they conform to their way of thinking and feeling'.<sup>52</sup> What combines these two kinds of songs, or what the anonymous Scottish or

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<sup>46</sup> Cf. Dick 2005: 68f. ('the meaning of *Volk* was also determined by the existence of two further terms, *Nation* and *Natur*. When used as first part of compounds like *Nationalpoesie*, *Naturpoesie*, or *Volkspoesie*, the three terms came rather close to being interchangeable. Each of them has, of course, its own semantic core. But in the semantic field that ties them together, they form a triad with an unusually high degree of functional interaction, up to the point of mutual substitution').

<sup>47</sup> On Herder's publications of folk songs, cf. *supra* n. 14.

<sup>48</sup> Dick 2005: 65.

<sup>49</sup> Burke 2009: 24.

<sup>50</sup> In this sense, both Ossian's epic poems published by Macpherson (*Fragments of Ancient Poetry*, 1760-1763) and Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765) were also considered samples of folksong. See e.g. Herder's essay *Briefwechsel über Ossian* (1763). Cf. also Burke 2009: 25 ('Percy [...] did not think ballads had anything to do with the people, but rather that they were composed by minstrels enjoying a high status at medieval courts. However, the *Reliques* were interpreted, from Herder onwards, as a collection of folksongs').

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Dick 2005: 58, 63.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Rubieri (1877: 237): 'I canti popolari possono essere composti o dal popolo e pel popolo; o pel popolo, ma non dal popolo; o non dal popolo né pel popolo, ma da esso adottati perché conformi alla sua maniera di pensare e di sentire.' Rubieri's threefold classification preserves much of Herder's original conceptualisation of folksong. But of course, it also represents a later development, and indeed adds the complication of the 'songs composed for the people but not by the people', in which we can recognize what is nowadays termed 'folklorism',

Latvian ballads and the great poems by Homer or Dante have in common, is the fact that they express the voice of the people, and by the same token the original soul and ancient traditions that contribute to founding a national identity.<sup>53</sup>

In the original conceptualisation of *Volkspoesie*, another important aspect, which was highly influential but also highly misunderstood, is the Romantic theory of communal authorship (or communal creation).<sup>54</sup> The gist of this theory is found, no longer surprisingly, in Vico's thought. His 'astonishing observation that Homer never existed as an individual poet, and his insistence that Homer's epics were, in reality, the product of rhapsodes, who assembled the ancient tales of prehistoric Greece', also influence (indirectly) Herder's views on early epic composition and pre-literary authorship.<sup>55</sup> Herder considers Homer as a cultural symbol of the entire ancient Greek tradition, whose songs are reshaped by anonymous epic authors in the interest of this tradition. In this sense, Herder is able to call Homer 'the greatest folk poet'.<sup>56</sup> On this view, the early Romantics do not deny the individual composition of folk songs.<sup>57</sup> Rather, they argue that the first and original author, whether known (e.g. Homer, Dante or Shakespeare) or unknown (the common people), is just a mere accident in the compositional history of a given folk song. Folk songs express the spirit of an entire nation (cf. *Nationalpoesie*). Therefore, they belong to the people; anyone among the people might have composed them. This Romantic theory of communal authorship finds its fullest expression in the dictum *Das Volk dichtet* ('the people creates') formulated by the Grimms, who applied their theory not just to folk songs but also to fairy tales and epic. For the Grimms, the composition

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'fakelore', or 'pseudo-folklore' (cf. Dorson 2005; Šmidchens 2005). It is also interesting to notice that Antonio Gramsci reduced the definition of folksong to Rubieri's third category, which was in step with his own concepts of folklore and *letteratura nazionale-popolare* (cf. Bronzini 1980: 119-132; Parker 2011: 155). On the misuse in Italian culture of the term *nazionalpopolare*, in contrast with the original Gramscian concept, cf. Scelsi 2014.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Bronzini 1980: 58. See also Burke (2009: 35): 'As one Finnish intellectual put it at the time, "No fatherland can exist without folk poetry. Poetry is nothing more than the crystal in which a nationality can mirror itself; it is the spring which brings to the surface the truly original in the folk soul".'

<sup>54</sup> On communalism as a whole in the Romantic folklore, see Burke 2009: 47.

<sup>55</sup> See Dick 2005: 62. Cf. also the later statements in the philological study of Friedrich August Wolf (*Prolegomena ad Homerum*, 1795).

<sup>56</sup> See Dick 2005: 63.

<sup>57</sup> This aspect was often misunderstood and thus became an object for hypocrisy in later scholarship, see Bronzini 1966: 121-154.

of folk songs, fairy tales and epic is natural and spontaneous. It is as if folk poetry composes itself (cf. *Naturpoesie*).<sup>58</sup>

To conclude this subsection, we have seen how the original conceptualisation of the notion of folksong (or folk poetry) was profoundly tied to the Romantic discovery of ‘the people’, their collective identity-building and their culture, and in turn to the cultural influences that characterised this discovery.<sup>59</sup> We can now advance to explore what happened to the notions of both folklore and folksong as soon as the cultural background of Romanticism, in which they originally formed, began to lose its strength, from around the second half of the nineteenth century. An ongoing debate has raged ever since about what folklore really is and what kinds of products can sincerely be labelled as ‘folk’. We cannot follow every single aspect of this discussion, but in our next subsection I will simply offer an overview of its main trends and movements.<sup>60</sup> We need to keep in mind that, although many of the most radical points have been criticised and severely revised, some of the Romantic characterisations still pervade scholarship up to the present day.

### 1.1.2 Post-romantic conceptualisations of folklore and folksong

Broadly speaking, folklore and folksong have been understood as a major part of the complex and variegated phenomenon we have termed, at the beginning of this section, ‘popular culture’, that is to say, a culture from which certain dominant social groups have historically tended to distance themselves. More specifically, folklore has been interpreted as ‘the culture which originates from “the people”’, and therefore folksong as ‘a product of “the people”’.<sup>61</sup> This

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<sup>58</sup> See Burke (2009: 24): ‘The association of poetry with the people received even more emphasis in the work of the Grimm brothers. In an essay on the *Nibelungenlied*, Jakob Grimm pointed out that the author of the poem is unknown, “as is usual with all national poems and must be the case, because they belong to the whole people”. Their authorship was communal: “the people creates” (*Das Volk dichtet*). In a famous epigram, he wrote that “every epic must write itself” (*jedes Epos muss sich selbst dichten*). These poems were not made; like trees, they just grew. Hence Grimm described popular poetry as “poetry of nature” (*Naturpoesie*).’ See also Dick 2005: 71.

<sup>59</sup> My overview that follows is somewhat generic and does not deal with the specifics and the differences that this discovery entailed for each of the European countries involved. For example, we have mentioned above the relation between folksong and nationalism, which was relevant in some countries more than in others. Cf. also Bronzini 1966: 125-127, on the absence, in the Italian concept of *poesia popolare*, of the threefold symbolism, aesthetic, political and moral, which was more pronounced in the German *Volkspoesie*.

<sup>60</sup> On the different approaches adopted in folklore studies, see Sims–Stephens 2011: 180-205.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Parker 2011: 153 and 169.

culture of ‘the people’ has been seen as a world apart, enclosed unto itself, in contrast with the culture of those who do not count as ‘the people’. This reminds us of the marked distinction between *Kultur des Volkes* (‘folk culture’) and *Kultur der Gelehrten* (‘learned culture’), which prevailed during the height of Romanticism and beyond. It must be said that some sort of interaction between these two cultures has to be admitted. Nevertheless, the various processes which have been studied and described, both of ‘sinking’ to the bottom of the social scale and of ‘rising’ up the social scale, still suggest a somewhat crude and mechanical image that cannot help but reinforce the division between folk culture and learned culture.<sup>62</sup>

The understanding of folklore has mostly depended on the interpretation of ‘who are the folk?’, an interpretation which has not been univocal.<sup>63</sup> As we have seen above, the Romantic term *Volk*, at least initially, encompassed a tangled web of semantics, in which the meaning of folk as a social class, best represented by the European peasants, became prevalent only later towards the end of the nineteenth century. From this perspective hence, folklore has come to be perceived and studied as the culture of the illiterate, the rural and the lower social stratum, as opposed to the culture of the elite (i.e. the literate, the urban, the upper social stratum).<sup>64</sup> Yet this view was sometimes criticised as too narrow, since it excluded categories such as the urban people and the primitive ones. For example, some scholars interpreted the uncultured folk-peasants (illiterate) as the missing link between the civilised (literate) and the primitive (pre- or non-literate) worlds, and for this reason, they claimed that the concept of folk should be expanded to include primitive societies.<sup>65</sup> Despite some earlier criticisms, the interpretation of the folk as denoting the uncultured and backward peasants, who retained their archaic and traditional beliefs, customs, stories, songs and sayings of a given community, was

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<sup>62</sup> Cf. also Avlami (2011: 80 n. 43) on ‘the use of metaphors from the natural world to recast the relationship between elite and popular: elite cultural forms “sinking” into the popular, popular elements “bubbling up” into the elite horizon, “osmosis” between the two traditions. Such metaphors depict the elite existing among the popular in the terms that elite self-presentation would have it, like oil on water: each tradition with its own properties and cultural forms clearly stratified.’ For an overview of the sinking and rising theories in the study of popular culture, see Burke 2009: 94-102.

<sup>63</sup> See e.g. Dundes 1980: 1-6; Burke 2009: 49-102.

<sup>64</sup> See Dundes 1980: 4.

<sup>65</sup> Other scholars argued, on the contrary, that the specific study of primitive societies had to belong to the discipline of ethnography or anthropology, not to folklorists. On this debate, see Dundes 1980: 4f. On the analysis of the ‘folk’ in an urban context, see Burke 2009: 64-72.

predominant at least until the second half of the twentieth century, and sometimes persists to this day.

Because of this very interpretation, folklore has also appeared to be a vanishing or endangered culture, which is and has been threatened by the presence of a more fashionable, different typology of popular culture, categorised by terms like ‘mass culture’ or ‘culture industry’. These terms came into usage to describe the social and cultural changes resulting from the rise of more mechanised and industrialised civilisations – towards the end of the nineteenth century – and against which some intellectuals of the time strongly reacted.<sup>66</sup> The culture industry (or mass culture) was interpreted as the new culture of the mass society: a culture which is both mass-producing and mass-consuming, and thus imposes upon the masses from above with the deliberate intention of producing widespread if not absolute cultural conformity.<sup>67</sup> This emergence of a more commoditised and commercialised culture was decried as a debased and vulgar substitute for the traditional culture identified with folklore.<sup>68</sup> At any rate, the most immediate, post-Romantic interpretations of folklore pointed to a culture that was old, old-fashioned, exotic, rural, uneducated and dying out.<sup>69</sup>

Like the overall notion of folklore, the post-Romantic conceptualisation of folksong (or folk poetry) is grounded in the rigid distinction between the culture of the folk and the culture of the learned. This dichotomy has subsequently been explored by different standpoints, which habitually do not take into account the issue of who the people really are, but rather focus on internal/external features of the texts under scrutiny. These features are generally analysed in terms of their opposites and lead scholars to interpret folksong (or folk poetry) as oral, basic, anonymous and traditional, in opposition to what is commonly considered written, sophisticated, authorial and innovative; in sum, to what is conventionally termed ‘literate’

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<sup>66</sup> The most influent theorisation belongs to the prominent members of the Frankfurt School, Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno. Cf. Parker 2011: 152 with 31; Grig 2017: 6 with n. 21.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Storey 2003: 16-31; Parker 2011: 152f. (see definition no. 3); Grig 2017: 4-6.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Grig (2017: 5): ‘McDonald contrasted this mass culture with “folk art”, which he saw, like Herder and the Grimms before him, as “a spontaneous autochthonous expression of the people, shaped by themselves” while “Mass Culture is imposed from above. It is fabricated by technicians hired by businessmen; its audience are passive consumers, their participation limited to the choice between buying and not buying”.’

<sup>69</sup> Some of the most recent scholarship has also tried to look at the question of ‘who are the folk?’ from a new light, in an attempt to go beyond the common dichotomies of folk/elite, uncultured/learned, and primitive/modern. This perspective will be the starting point of my discussion about a new definition of folksong, set out in the third section (§1.3) of this Introduction.

poetry (or literature). Of course, even the concept of ‘literature’ is a difficult one to define specifically.<sup>70</sup> Most conventional views on literature, however, make us immediately think of written and highly sophisticated works,<sup>71</sup> which can usually be (or should be) ascribed to a specific writer and to a defined historical period.<sup>72</sup> Besides, we should not forget the institutional element in the creation of the category ‘literature’. For example, we usually study literary texts and literature in school or at university: what is learned outside the institutionalised, formal education represents the unauthorised, unofficial knowledge that is informally learned, and that can be interpreted and perceived as ‘popular culture’.<sup>73</sup> With this modern view of literature the notion of folksong is sharply contrasted. This opposition reflects, albeit from different perspectives, the Romantic distinction of *Kunstpoesie* and *Volkspoesie*, which in turn expresses the broader distinction between *Kultur des Volkes* and *Kultur der Gelehrten*. The point is that such an interpretation does not really define what a folk song is, but merely demarcates the boundaries of cultural items that are left over after we have decided what a folk song is not. As I shall show later with specific regard to the *carmina popularia* (§1.2), the analysis of classical texts (and ancient folk literature as a whole) is generally grounded on these post-romantic analyses. But first, in what follows, I shall review the main methodological, theoretical and interpretative issues of the binary oppositions on which these analyses are based. For convenience’s sake, I shall describe one by one the criteria of orality

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<sup>70</sup> On the different strands, approaches and definitions adopted in the interpretation of ‘literature’, see e.g. Makaryk 1993: 581-583; Culler 1997; Ercolani 2014: 8f.; Maslov 2015: 9-11.

<sup>71</sup> For example, the online edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* offers the following concise definition of ‘literature’: ‘written works, esp. those considered of superior or lasting artistic merit’ (s.v. no. 1 <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/literature>).

<sup>72</sup> If the author and/or the date of composition of a piece of literature are unknown, the aim of students of literature is just that of investigating these kinds of issues. For instance, on the ‘sovereignty of the author’ in modern literary discourse, see Foucault (1991: 454): ‘Literary anonymity was of interest only as a puzzle to be solved as, in our day, literary works are totally dominated by the sovereignty of the author.’ For further discussion on Foucault’s views (and on his notion of ‘author-function’), see §1.3.4.

<sup>73</sup> Put simply, there is a difference between learning to quilt, attending a gathering of more experienced quilters, and the knowledge and memorisation of a composition by Mozart at school. On folklore as ‘informally learned and unofficial, part of everyday experience’, cf. e.g. Sims–Stephens 2011: 5f. On the role played by institutions and authorities in the creation of popular culture – understood as ‘unauthorised’ culture – see Parker 2011: 165-170 (he is primarily interested in identifying those institutions and authorities that confer authority, that authorise a painting as a piece of art, a poem as literature, a healing practice as medical science, and so on). Conversely, on the inapplicability of Parker’s approach to the political and institutional context of fifth-century BC Athens, see Canevaro 2017.



(§1.1.2.i), sophistication (§1.1.2.ii), anonymity (§1.1.2.iii), and traditionality (§1.1.2.iv), as far as they have been adopted in the interpretation of folksong. At the same time, I shall highlight as far as possible the continuous overlaps of these criteria in the various interpretative contexts in which they have occurred.

### **1.1.2.i        Folksong as oral poetry**

The pair ‘oral’ and ‘folk’ have been associated ever since the notion of folksong itself came into use. This relationship has proved particularly strong in relation to epic poetry. As mentioned above, the Homeric epics (and oral epic traditions as a whole) were originally considered as a classic exemplar of folk poetry. Later, through the study of the Serbo-Croat epic traditions and their comparison with the Homeric poems, Mathias Murko, Milman Parry and Albert B. Lord founded the theory of oral tradition and oral composition.<sup>74</sup> In this new field of study, the concepts of folk poetry and oral poetry became interchangeable:

Moreover, orality is often idealized, invested with the romantic and nostalgic ideas connected with folklore, folk culture, and folk tradition, or the ‘noble savage’. ‘Oral culture’ is often used interchangeably with folklore, folklore is seen as ‘oral tradition’, and with little critical examination, but much idealism, orality and ‘oral societies’ take on the romantic and exaggerated attributes of folk culture. In other words they become more than merely descriptive tools and start to imply a whole mentality or world view which is partly born of a reaction to the modern world. Oral culture is innocent, pure, and natural, uncorrupted by the written word, or perhaps, depending on one’s standpoint, the pure manifestation of a people’s character. In the study of Greece, this romanticism is most clearly visible in modern discussions of Homer and oral poetry.<sup>75</sup>

The major problem of interpreting folksong as oral poetry lies in the deep gulf that has often been detected between what is oral and what is written. Orality has been interpreted as a very narrow category determining a specific mentality, which in turn determines the style and content of a certain type of poetry. In this sense, orality and the conception of an oral mentality would represent completely distinct categories from writing and a literate mentality. This strict opposition, and the identification of oral poetry with folk poetry, were still evident in the authoritative definition by Lord (1965: 591), who had described ‘oral poetry’ as ‘poetry

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<sup>74</sup> On the Parry-Lord thesis, see e.g. Thomas 1992: 31-36.

<sup>75</sup> Thomas 1992: 6f. On the overlap between folk and oral poetry, see also Finnegan 1977: 1-16, 36-41.

composed in oral performance by people who cannot read or write. It is synonymous with traditional and folk poetry.’<sup>76</sup>

Defining folk poetry as poetry composed (and transmitted) through purely oral means, in direct contrast to written, literary poetry, is too categorical and does not take into account the intrinsic ambiguity, contextual relativism and complexity of a criterion such as that of orality. Recent scholarship has indeed shown that what is generally labelled ‘oral poetry’ does not eschew from first principles the involvement of writing in the various stages of its composition and/or transmission.<sup>77</sup> Take, for example, the English ‘broadside’ or ‘street’ ballads. It is important to know that ‘street ballads’ started to circulate as printed broadside texts, and only later circulated through oral channels (e.g. as performed by ballad singers), even though this oral transmission could still be influenced by their parallel distribution in written form. Besides, even renowned poets had written poems that then circulated orally and anonymously as ‘street ballads’ (cf. e.g. Christopher Marlowe’s *Come live with me*).<sup>78</sup> The fact of a song or ballad’s oral performance need not necessarily coincide with its having a pure oral composition or transmission. Most importantly, if oral performance is the central criterion of folk poetry, any texts that are actually performed or performable can be considered oral, regardless of their contexts of origin and production, or whether these contexts exclusively entail composition during performance or also (or instead) written composition.<sup>79</sup> Likewise, folk poetry, in that it is actualised in performance (in the form of songs), can undoubtedly be considered oral poetry.

Orality is thus a relevant factor to take into account in the conceptualisation of folksong, as long as it is not seen in opposition to the use of writing (in the composition and/or transmission of song-texts), and, more generally, as long as it does not imply sharp distinctions between oral and written mentalities. Yet, the criterion of orality needs further clarification and

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<sup>76</sup> Lord’s definition appears in the first edition of *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*. In the fourth and last edition of the same volume – published in 2012 – in the entry ‘oral poetry’, we find no explicit identification between oral poetry and folk poetry like that expressed by Lord in 1965. However, in the index of the 2012, as regards the term ‘folk poetry’, the reader is once again referred to ‘oral poetry’.

<sup>77</sup> On the dynamics of production, circulation, and transmission of texts in oral cultures, signal works are those of Finnegan 1977 and 1988; Goody 1986 and 1987; McLuhan 1962; Ong 1982; and Thomas 1992, esp. 1-28.

<sup>78</sup> On ‘street ballads’ and other examples of oral poetry composed and/or transmitted in writing, see e.g. Finnegan 1977: 160-170. As a further specific case, see Beaton 1980: 179-202, on the interrelation between orality and writing in Modern Greek folk poetry.

<sup>79</sup> On actualisation in performance as a central criterion in the study of oral poetry, cf. e.g. Finnegan 1977: 20f.

contextualisation: we should wonder, for example, what *specific* kind of oral performance characterises folk songs (see §1.3.2).<sup>80</sup> Considering the two notions – ‘oral’ and ‘folk’ – as interchangeable is not enough. While folk songs are certainly ‘oral’ from a performative perspective, not all that is performed orally should be considered folklore.<sup>81</sup>

### 1.1.2.ii Folksong as unsophisticated poetry

The understanding of oral folk-poetry has also been based on criteria of literary or artistic sophistication. Orality has been deemed to determine a specific, universal style, characterised by a simplicity of structure and thus inferior in quality to literate poetry.<sup>82</sup> Basic linguistic and stylistic traits would constitute oral folk-poetry, whose most marked feature would be, for example, repetition. In particular, this feature has been seen as an important part of the primeval nature of both primitive man and the illiterate folk, and it has therefore been considered a necessary yardstick to distinguish oral folk-poetry from written literature.<sup>83</sup> Two main objections to this criterion can be made. Firstly, repetition in its various forms – e.g. parallelism, formulaic expression, alliteration, verbal repetition, and antiphonal forms – is too broad a phenomenon to be considered the touchstone of a supposed oral and folk style. Forms of repetition can be found in texts usually considered as part of canonical written literature.<sup>84</sup> Secondly, and more generally, formal criteria that seek to establish to what degree a cultural product is aesthetically sophisticated are essentially subjective and can vary from context to context.<sup>85</sup>

One of the most extreme positions in interpreting folk poetry on the basis of these criteria of sophistication was that of Benedetto Croce (1933: 1-64). Croce argued that the

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<sup>80</sup> Below, I shall show that folk songs are always actualised in ‘synchronic reperformances’.

<sup>81</sup> On performance and the study of performative aspects in folklore as a whole, see Sims–Stephens 2011: 130-179.

<sup>82</sup> This is also the case of those texts that are thought to be ‘sinking’ from elite culture into popular culture (cf. e.g. Bogatyrëv–Jakobson 2005: 181, on the history of Puškin’s poem *The Hussar*).

<sup>83</sup> Cf. e.g. Finnegan 1977: 88-133.

<sup>84</sup> See Finnegan 1977: 126-133.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Parker (2011: 151): ‘Determining the “quality” (in all senses) is a problem both historical – determining what counted as “high culture” in other eras – and trans-historical, since the judgment required to determine what makes the grade is the very distinction that we are questioning.’ Cf. also Hansen (1998: xii): ‘Inexperienced and naive artists produce immature and naive art, regardless of whether their aim is high art or low art. Since every level of art has its failures, it would be arrogant to declare that all elite literature is automatically good by virtue of its lofty goals and that all other literature is poor because its aspirations are more modest.’

essence of folk poetry was to be found in its internal psychological tone. In his view, folk poetry was characterised by a simple and basic psychological tone, learned poetry by a complex and sophisticated one. Croce drew a connection between the internal psychological tone of a text and its formal features, whereby a simple and basic tone would always correspond to simple and basic words and style. In this analysis Croce aimed to overcome the Romantic antinomy between *Kunstpoesie* and *Volkspoesie*.<sup>86</sup> But to do so, he resorted to equally vague and undefined oppositions, based on criteria of sophistication that are too abstract and elusive to be pinned down concretely.<sup>87</sup>

Textual analysis and formal criteria are not to be dismissed altogether in the conceptualisation of folksong. At the same time, these aspects should not be adopted to point to precise and well-defined degrees of sophistication, by which to distinguish between lowbrow ('folk') poetry and highbrow ('literary') poetry. In the chapters to follow, I shall show that no universal style or level of sophistication of folk poetry has ever existed. If anything, when criteria such as basic style and simplicity can be detected (as opposed to more complex structures), these do not necessarily result in a lower quality and do not refer to preconceived (lowbrow) contexts of origin and production. Rather, they may sometimes reveal a texture to the work in question that is more fitting to a particular mode of use and consumption in the perception of songs (cf. §1.3.2).

### **1.1.2.iii      Folksong as anonymous poetry**

A further aspect that has conditioned the interpretation and definition of oral folk-poetry is its supposed status as anonymous poetry. Yet, the criterion of anonymity turns out to be elusive, if only for the obvious reason that any kind of text must have been authored by someone in one way or another. As seen above, in its original conceptualisation, Herder and his followers considered folksong anonymous in the sense of 'composed communally'. In emphasising this communalism, they did not mean to deny the individual composition of folksong, but rather wanted to stress its national and collective character: the voice of one could stand for the voice of everyone, and of the whole people. In later scholarship, when folk songs started losing their associations with the ideas of nation and nationalism, the theory of communal authorship was

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<sup>86</sup> For example, Croce dismissed criteria such as anonymity, improvisation, origin from the lower class, communal origin and transmission, oral tradition, and textual fluidity, as extrinsic and accidental features that are unable or inadequate to correctly define the nature of folk poetry.

<sup>87</sup> On Croce's interpretation and his influence in later scholarship, see Bronzini 1980: 95-117.

progressively abandoned, sometimes misunderstood and hypercriticised, or defended from different perspectives. On the one hand, modern scholarship has stressed the individual composition of much oral folk-poetry, as represented not only by occasional, amateur poets but also by specialists and experts.<sup>88</sup> On the other hand, a quite different trend in the interpretation of anonymity has stemmed from the defence and re-interpretation of the theory of communal authorship.

This renewed defence of communal authorship bestows primacy not on the original composition of a folk song, but on its continuous reproduction and recreation: folk poetry is orally transmitted and through this transmission it is continuously modified and adapted. In this sense, folk poetry is anonymous not because we do not know the name of the author, but because it enjoys multiple creations and compositions, the most tangible signs of which is its susceptibility to textual variation. The leading and formative concepts of this renewed theory of communal authorship occurred as early as the 1920s, with the publication of the works of the Spanish philologist Ramón Menéndez Pidal, *Sobre geografía folklórica* (1920) and *Poesía popular y poesía tradicional en la literatura española* (1927), as well as with the joint publication of the paper *Die Folklore als eine besondere Form des Schaffens* by the Russian structuralists Pëtr Bogatyřev and Roman Jakobson.<sup>89</sup> Menéndez Pidal, for example, argued that the essence of folk poetry was to be found in its reworking by means of variants. He proposed the more specific terminology of ‘traditional poetry’, in order to stress this oral and continuously adapted transmission.<sup>90</sup> Through a different approach, Bogatyřev and Jakobson came to similar conclusions. Their explicit aim was to resurrect the Romantic theory of communal authorship. This rehabilitation drew on Saussurian linguistics and its emphasis on the distinction between *langue* and *parole*. Just as the individual deviations from speech (*parole*) could become part of the shared system of language (*langue*), but only once the language community had appropriated them, the particular instances of the folkloric work in

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<sup>88</sup> Cf. Pearce 1953; Finnegan 1977: 170-206; Beaton 1980: 152-155; Burke 2009: 133-155 (on the broader concept of ‘popular’ artist).

<sup>89</sup> The paper by Bogatyřev and Jakobson was originally published in *Donum Natalicum Schrijnen*, Nijmegen, 1929, pp. 900-913. For the English translation, followed here, see Bogatyřev–Jakobson 2005.

<sup>90</sup> In some contexts, Menéndez Pidal also proposed to sharply distinguish ‘traditional’ poetry from ‘popular’ poetry, the latter being considered a passing trend that people simply repeat without variation. On this and other aspects of Menéndez Pidal’s thought, see Frenk 2015.

question (its variants) were to be conceived as part of the common body of folkloric traditions accepted by a given community.<sup>91</sup>

The renewed trend towards the theory of communal authorship – which suggests that oral folk-poetry is anonymous because it is produced communally by means of re-invention and variation – had significant repercussions on what became the philological approach to the study of folk poetry.<sup>92</sup> This approach was especially developed in the second half of the twentieth century, and was reflected in the so-called ‘historical-geographical’ school (which was equally interested in oral prose narratives, usually termed ‘folktales’).<sup>93</sup> The philological approach aims to trace the historical and geographical origins of a given text, and therefrom to reconstruct the ultimate archetype from which all local variants are supposed to derive. The main problem of this approach lies in the fact that it puts too much emphasis on the content and formal elements of the texts at stake, while playing down their social contexts and modes of performance and re-performance.<sup>94</sup> These formal elements would, on this approach, essentially be determined by nothing more than the textual variants. In this sense, variants would serve the same function as figures of repetition and formulae do in the theory of oral composition.<sup>95</sup> Just as figures of repetition and formulae would constitute the proof that oral poetry is orally composed, so variants would prove to be the decisive yardstick in determining what folk poetry is. However, we are now aware that the style of oral poetry cannot be reduced to repetition and formulaic expressions, since both elements are found in a much larger variety of texts. Likewise, in the domain of variants, we can also include the author-variants or the activity of

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<sup>91</sup> Cf. e.g. Bogatyřev–Jakobson (2005: 178f.): ‘One of the significant characteristics differentiating folklore from literature is the mode of existence of the work of art. In folklore, the relationship between the work of art and its realization, i.e. the so-called variants of the work in the performance of different persons, is completely analogous to the relationship between *langue* and *parole*. Like *langue*, the work of folklore is extra-personal and has only a potential existence. It is only a complex of certain norms and impulses, a canvas of living tradition, which the performers animate with the embellishments of individual creativity, just as the creators of *parole* do in relationship to *langue*. To the extent that these individual innovations in language (or in folklore) correspond to the demands of the community and anticipate the rule-governed evolution of *langue* (or folklore), they are socialized and form the facts of *langue* (or elements in the work of folklore).’

<sup>92</sup> On the influences of Menéndez Pidal’s and Bogatyřev–Jakobson’s theories on the philological approach to the study of folk poetry, see Bronzini 1966: 17-19; Cirese 1973: 96-106.

<sup>93</sup> See e.g. Finnegan 1977: 41-44.

<sup>94</sup> See Finnegan 1977: 42.

<sup>95</sup> On the trait of repetition in the oral culture, cf. §1.1.2.ii. On the formulaic theory, see e.g. Finnegan 1977: 58-72; Thomas 1992: 40-44.

anonymous authors and scribes of the middle ages, who treated the works they copied as materials subject to transformation. The latter activity may recall the principles of communal authorship, but in neither case can we include the example of folk poetry.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, ascertaining the existence of true variants descending from a same original text is less easy than it may seem. It cannot be excluded, for one thing, that similar types of songs may be unrelated to one another and may instead derive from independent formations.<sup>97</sup> In these cases, we are not faced with proper variants, but with similar variations of different songs, which would not account for the existence of an original archetype, but would merely attest to the independent formations of similar songs in similar contexts. Of course, the analysis of the textual variants, where they can be attested with certainty, may be an important aspect to take into account in the study of oral transmission (and other neighbouring areas too). Nonetheless, variants (or supposed variants) are not to be considered *per se* the key factor in the interpretation of folk poetry. It is now clear that even the renewed theory of communal authorship – in the sense of communal reworking by means of variants – cannot constitute the analytical framework within which the concept of folksong may be fully understood.

The anonymity criterion, understood in terms of binary oppositions – anonymous vs. authorial, or more specifically, communal authorship vs. individual composition – turns out to be illusory and elusive. Yet, anonymity remains an important aspect that should not be dismissed altogether in the conceptualisation of folksong. Rather, this ingredient needs to be analysed from new methodological perspectives that are no longer based on preconceived contexts of a work's origin and its composition (cf. §1.3.4).

#### **1.1.2.iv      Folksong as traditional poetry**

The last point upon which we need to reflect is 'tradition': in what sense has folksong been seen as traditional? The concept of tradition has occupied a dominant role in the study of folklore ever since the discipline began. At the same time, this concept has a much broader conceptual framework as far as folklorists are concerned, and unsurprisingly, it has been questioned over the years.<sup>98</sup> Broadly speaking, the key aspect in interpreting folksong as traditional lies in its

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<sup>96</sup> Similar considerations were already made, with different intentions, by Bogatyrev–Jakobson 2005: 185 and Croce 1933: 2.

<sup>97</sup> See e.g. Beaton 1980: 136–147.

<sup>98</sup> For a general overview of the concept of tradition, see Sims–Stephens 2011: 69–97. On the fact that even literature can be considered a tradition, cf. Whitmarsh 2004: 18–32 (with specific regard to the ancient Greek literary tradition).

oral transmission. This kind of transmission implies that a folk song is a text that has been orally handed down from one generation to another, for quite long periods of time and in a relatively unchanged form. Obviously, oral transmission could allow for creativity and innovation – just look at what has been said above about variants (§1.1.2.iii)<sup>99</sup> – but however innovated, modified and adapted it may be, this transmission gives us back fossils of a primeval culture, which are at risk of disappearing. On this view, the ‘traditionality’ of oral folk-poetry primarily refers to an undefined primitivism. However, even though this conception may still pervade our preconceived perceptions of folksong, the idea of a long-standing, pure tradition through oral transmission in folklore and folk poetry has been widely rejected as groundless generalisation. As mentioned above, variants are no longer to be considered hard evidence for long-established and continuous song traditions. Conversely, it must be admitted that we usually have little or no information at all about the earlier oral transmission of a given song-text. Furthermore, it cannot be excluded that what is generally considered pure, oral transmission may itself have been the object of the frequent interaction of writing.<sup>100</sup>

If what we mean by folksong is an orally transmitted, long-lasting, song-making tradition, our perception and understanding of folksong may turn out to be partial and sometimes misleading as well. By contrast, we should be aware that this is only one way in which ‘traditionality’ can be seen. Other perspectives can be explored and may lead to new dimensions of ‘tradition’ in the conceptualisation of folksong (cf. §1.3.3).

### **1.1.2.v Final remarks**

Aspects such as orality, formal criteria (or texture), anonymity, and traditionality are not to be easily dismissed in the conceptualisation of folksong, but they need to be approached with more theoretical rigour (cf. §1.3). In post-romantic analyses, these criteria have been applied in terms of binary oppositions, in a way that reflects the common distinction between folk culture and learned culture. In compliance with this distinction, folk songs would not stand up to the standards of what is instead considered written, sophisticated, authorial and modern. Such binary oppositions often stem from generalisations and oversimplifications and give further prominence to the oversimplified dichotomy between ‘literary’ forms and ‘folk’ traditions. The

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<sup>99</sup> Let us also remember that Menéndez Pidal proposed for folk poetry the more specific terminology of ‘traditional poetry’. On the relation between tradition and creativity in the transmission of folklore, see Burke 2009: 160-162.

<sup>100</sup> On these issues about oral transmission, cf. Finnegan 1977: 19f., 134-169. See also §1.1.2.i.



risk is that of interpreting the notion of folksong as a fixed textual category, based on preconceived contexts of origin and composition. Similar interpretations have also been applied in the analysis of the ancient Greek texts included in the collection of the so-called *carmina popularia*.

## 1.2 The collection of the *carmina popularia* and their (ancient and modern) interpretations

In the wake of the Romantic discovery of folksong, students of Greek literature began to gather together a series of anonymous melic poems under the labels *cantilenae populares* or *carmina popularia* – the latter still the more widely used designation to this day. Following the pioneering efforts of Ilgen (1797, whose publication was exclusively devoted to begging songs) and Zell (1826), the first systematic collection of the *carmina popularia* was that of Köster (1831). Several editions have since followed, each with a different choice of texts.<sup>101</sup> The 37 fragments collected in Page's collection (*PMG* 847-883) – simply arranged into the alphabetical order of the sources that transmit them (from Athenaeus to Zenobius) – represent the ultimate result of this editorial history and today constitute the most authoritative reference collection of the *carmina popularia*.<sup>102</sup> Some general questions arise at this venture: What do these texts represent? How do modern scholars interpret them? What were the ancient perception and reception of these and similar texts?

In modern terms, *PMG* 847-883 would be defined as folk songs consisting of e.g. begging songs, love songs, work songs, war songs, children's songs, ritual/religious songs and so on.<sup>103</sup> Most significantly, the *carmina popularia* represent what modern editors have placed outside the official body of 'high' poetry or literature, and which they have sub-divided into

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<sup>101</sup> See the editions of Schneidewin 1839, Bergk 1882, Smyth 1900, Diehl 1925, and Edmonds 1940 (cf. Bibliography §1.1). Cf. also the useful dossier of potential *testimonia* on the folksong tradition in Edmonds 1940: 488-507. On the origin and development of the collection of the *carmina popularia* from modern to contemporary times, see recently Magnani 2013a: 559-569 (cf. also Barbantani 2017: 371f.). The inconsistencies of the editors' choices not only depend on the elusive notion of 'folk' (see *infra*), but also on the definition of *carmina*, cf. esp. Magnani 2013a: 544.

<sup>102</sup> As such, Page's edition will be adopted in the present work. Campbell's (1993) and Neri's (2003) editions rely on Page's. Neri also provides a translation, a synthetic commentary, and exhaustive bibliographical notes. In his newly published edition of Greek lyric (with commentary), Budelmann (2018: 54f., 252-254, 255-264) has included in his selection *carm. pop.* 848, 853 and 869 (under the label of 'anonymous song').

<sup>103</sup> For a general re-examination of tradition, metre and content of the *carmina popularia*, see recently Magnani 2013a: 543-558. Cf. also Pordomingo 1979 and 1996; Brown 2002; Neri 2003: 193-199; Magnani 2013.

specific *genera* and authors. In this sense, the *carmina popularia* have also been referred to as ‘submerged’, ‘non-canonised’ literature.<sup>104</sup> Not surprisingly, we find here the usual dichotomy between ‘folk’ traditions (‘low’ poetry) and ‘literary’ forms (‘high’ poetry).<sup>105</sup> This dichotomy has been based on those criteria and binary oppositions (‘oral/written’, ‘simple/complex’, ‘anonymous/authorial’, ‘traditional/modern’) that (as we have seen) have been inadequately applied in the modern conceptualisation of folksong in general. These binary oppositions have implicitly guided editors’ choices in their selection of the *carmina popularia*.<sup>106</sup> On the other side, Pordomingo (1996) has explicitly listed a set of criteria (functionality, anonymity, oral and communal transmission, textual fluidity, traditionality), discussing them in terms of binary oppositions as the universal traits of folk poetry all over the world, and therefore as equally

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<sup>104</sup> This specific terminology goes back at least to the observations of Luigi Enrico Rossi (2000: 170-172; cf. Ercolani 2014: 7), who, in listing the texts and the typologies of texts that should feature in a study on ‘submerged literature’, also mentions the *carmina popularia*. Starting from these very broad observations, a research group of Rossi’s pupils has further developed the theme of ‘submerged’ culture and literature in ancient Greece, by coordinating a series of seminars (2011-2014) and publishing some of the results in three recent volumes on this topic: see Colesanti–Giordano 2014; Colesanti–Lulli 2016; Ercolani–Giordano 2016. Unfortunately, none of the articles collected in these volumes offers a systematic treatment of the *carmina popularia*. In the sporadic cases when the category of folksong (or folk poetry) enters the discussion, these are usually understood in the modern perspectives analysed above: cf. the articles by Colesanti 2014; Palmisciano 2014; Sbardella 2016. Besides, we should take into account that some of the texts nowadays transmitted under the label *carmina popularia* were in antiquity part of specific collections (see e.g. Magnani 2013a: 570f.), and by the simple fact of being committed to writing and collected, they were to some extent rendered canonical and saved from marginalisation. What is deemed submerged from a modern standpoint, then, may not be so for the ancient Greeks. Therefore, contrary to what Rossi thought, the category of submersion is not applicable to the *carmina popularia en bloc*.

<sup>105</sup> It is true that the interactions and reciprocal influences between these two forms have been constantly highlighted even in Greek culture: from Köster (1831: 10-12) to Lambin (1992), then to Pordomingo (1996: 474-476; 2000) and to Yatromanolakis (2009), who speaks of ‘interdiscursivity’. However, sinking and/or raising theories between ‘high’ and ‘low’ do not undermine the cultural distinctions on which the two categories are based (cf. *supra* n. 62). The intertextuality of ‘literary’ and ‘folk’ songs has been particularly stressed in Sappho’s wedding songs and in Theocritus’ idylls: cf. Yatromanolakis 2009: 266 with n. 21. On Theocritus’ reception of folk poetry, see e.g. Pretagostini 1992 and Sbardella 2016.

<sup>106</sup> The editors of the *carmina popularia* do not explicitly account for their choices. The only exception is Bergk (1882: 679-688), who, in the appendix to his edition, accounted for the exclusions affecting those texts considered recent and/or traceable to an authorial, more sophisticated tradition.

valid for the *carmina popularia*.<sup>107</sup> Palmisciano (2003) has recently grounded his definition of ancient Greek folk poetry through recourse to the same oppositions. In his view, the term ‘folk’ is applicable:

- to those texts strictly tied to an ethnological occasion and for which authorial production never existed; and
- to those texts devised in parallel to, and which are sometimes seen as the equivalent of, an authorial production, and which, due to their technical simplicity, could be modified and adapted to different contexts. These we can define as ‘open texts’.<sup>108</sup>

Here we find once again the opposition of authorial production and anonymously transmitted song-making traditions, as well as recourse to criteria of sophistication (see ‘technical simplicity’), and the concept of textual fluidity (see ‘open texts’).<sup>109</sup> Palmisciano offers no specific examples of these categories. Therefore, it remains unclear what kinds of song traditions have never experienced authorial production,<sup>110</sup> and what particular types of texts can be considered ‘open texts.’<sup>111</sup> Palmisciano’s definition thus conforms to a conceptualisation that does not really clarify what folk songs are, but that merely demarcates

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<sup>107</sup> Cf. e.g. Pordomingo (1996: 467): ‘Los términos [...] funcionalidad, anonimía, transmisión oral, difusión colectiva, reelaboración, tradicionalidad en suma, hablan de una serie de propiedades que definen, externa pero esencialmente, la poesía popular y que están bien representadas en la poesía popular griega.’

<sup>108</sup> Palmisciano 2003: 167f. (‘Dunque alla fine di questo esame mi sembra che si possa applicare il termine ‘popolare’ a quelle poesie che erano strettamente legate ad un’occasione di carattere etnologico per le quali non è mai esistita una produzione d’autore, oppure a quei testi, paralleli alla produzione d’autore e talvolta coincidenti con essa, che per la loro semplicità tecnica si configurarono, sin dalla nascita o durante la loro storia, come testi “aperti”, cioè testi di cui il fruitore si poteva appropriare integralmente, al punto da poterli modificare e adattare a nuovi contesti di comunicazione’). Palmisciano places the definitive separation between folksong and literary poetry in the Hellenistic period (cf. §1.2.1). However, in his analysis, he shows little interest in the actual texts collected in the *carmina popularia*.

<sup>109</sup> Anonymity and textual fluidity are among the main features that, according to Palmisciano 2014a, bring verse oracles close to the domain of folk poetry.

<sup>110</sup> Is Palmisciano perhaps referring to begging and work songs? At any rate, I shall show how an ‘authorial/authorising’ tradition can be detected even in those cases (cf. Chs. 2 and 3).

<sup>111</sup> According to Magnani (2013a: 566f.), Palmisciano’s definition would fit the tradition of the so-called Attic *skolia* (PMG 884-917), whose collection (labelled as *carmina convivalia*) has found a place beside the *carmina popularia* in the modern editions (cf. also Fabbro 1995). Modern scholars have compared these two textual categories on the basis of their common anonymous transmission and their supposed textual fluidity (see esp. Yatromanolakis 2009, but cf. also Palmisciano 2003: 166f. and 2014: 27). However, see *infra* n. 268.

the boundary between preconceived category of texts. Once again, it is worth recalling that the aspects mentioned by both Pordomingo and Palmisciano (i.e. functionality, orality, texture, traditionality, and anonymity) are not to be completely rejected in the conceptualisation of folksong (cf. §1.3). Rather, I take issue with the way that these aspects are generally applied: as reflected in the very interpretations of Pordomingo and Palmisciano, the aim has to be that of distinguishing specific and fixed textual categories like ‘folk poetry’ and ‘literate poetry’.

In the section that now follows, and on a case by case basis, I shall next explore the ambiguities and contradictions of the binary oppositions ‘oral/written’ (§1.2.1), ‘simple/complex’ (§1.2.2), ‘anonymous/authorial’ (§1.2.3), and ‘traditional/modern’ (§1.2.4), in the modern interpretation of the *carmina popularia*.<sup>112</sup> At the same time, I shall test whether and to what extent similar aspects can be found in the ancient reception of texts. Although similarities between ancient and modern perceptions can sometimes be detected, they do not result in a univocal and coherent interpretation of folksong in ancient Greek culture.

### 1.2.1 Orality in the *carmina popularia*

The *carmina popularia* are often interpreted in the terms that have typically been used to study oral poetry generally. This approach presumes not only that ancient Greek folk poetry was composed, performed and transmitted orally, but also that the *carmina popularia* represented a form of occasional poetry. As such, they were closely tied to a performative context, which defined them and within which they always held a specific pragmatic function. In this sense, the *carmina popularia* accompanied all the fundamental moments of Greek life.<sup>113</sup> The problem is that orality (including oral composition, transmission, and performance) and the related occasional-functional perspective are factors that have also been detected in and applied to archaic and classical Greek literature as a whole, from Homer to the fifth century BC.<sup>114</sup> What does this entail for the interpretation of the *carmina popularia*? Should we assume that all archaic and classical Greek poetry was folk poetry?

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<sup>112</sup> Neri (2003: 196-198) already highlighted some of the following issues.

<sup>113</sup> Following Lambin’s classification (1992), Palmisciano (2003: 156f. and 2014: 20f.) has more clearly catalogued these moments (such as war, wedding, funeral, working activities, collecting offerings, as well as other generic rites, social occasions and feasts) and the typologies of songs that were tied to them.

<sup>114</sup> On orality in archaic Greek culture, see the pioneering studies of Eric A. Havelock (1963), Bruno Gentili (2006), Claude Calame (2001), C. John Herington (1985, who introduced the terms ‘song culture’ and ‘book culture’), and Gregory Nagy (1990 and 1996). For more recent discussions (with further references), cf. also Ford 2003: 15-18; Yunis 2003: 1-14; Kowalzig 2007; Ercolani 2014: 13f.; Palmisciano 2014.

To overcome this impasse, Palmisciano argues that folk poetry in ancient Greece did not exist as an autonomous category until the Hellenistic age, that is to say, when the separation between oral culture and literate culture first started to form more diametrically.<sup>115</sup> In Palmisciano's view, forms of traditional folk-poetry had been part of the Greek poetic heritage for time immemorial. Only in the late archaic and classical periods did there occur a gradual differentiation between so-called 'traditional poetry' (i.e. the actual folk songs) and 'authorial poetry' (or 'art songs'), i.e. the poems transmitted under the names of the major Greek lyric poets known to us (from Alcman to Pindar). However, this distinction did not result in a devaluation of the traditional folk-poetry, as opposed to the authorial poetry. Rather, Palmisciano observes a harmonious coexistence between the two kinds and states that the monodic poetry of Sappho, Alcaeus and Anacreon was in many respects similar to the traditional folk-poetry.<sup>116</sup> According to Palmisciano, the unity of this poetic heritage began to shatter towards the end of the fifth century, in conjunction with significant cultural innovations of the time: e.g. the formation of canons of archaic lyric classics, the growth of greater musical professionalism, and new changes in musical styles.<sup>117</sup>

A decisive turning point in the separation between traditional folk-poetry and art poetry would have been represented by the shift from song culture to book culture in the Hellenistic age, when the predominance of orality made way for the increasing use of writing. During this period, learned poets, such as Theocritus, Herodas, and Machon readopted elements of the 'traditional' repertoire to satisfy the sophisticated demands of an audience of educated readers. Palmisciano refers to these reused elements as *popolareggianti*,<sup>118</sup> and he also mentions, in

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<sup>115</sup> See Palmisciano 2003: 154f., 167-169; Palmisciano 2014: 25-30.

<sup>116</sup> Similarly, cf. Lambin (1992: 378): 'la distinction entre *Kunstpoesie* et *Volkslied* serait encore plus arbitraire en Grèce qu'ailleurs [...]. Sappho, Alcée, Théocrite, les auteurs d'épigrammes, d'autres encore, trouvèrent dans la chanson une part non négligeable de leur inspiration.'

<sup>117</sup> On similar positions, cf. also Yatromanolakis 2009: 265f. On the debate surrounding the poet's professional status in archaic Greece, see recently Stewart (2016), who however argues that there are no tell-tale signs of discontinuity between the archaic and classical periods as regards a 'professional ideology' in the poetics of Greek lyric. On the other hand, professional musical performances were condemned by Plato and other ancient scholars as part of a more extended polemic against the theatrical genres and the New Music (cf. e.g. Ford 2002: 283f.; Csapo 2004: 236f.).

<sup>118</sup> On this term, cf. also Burke (2009: 100): 'Between learned culture and traditional oral culture came what might be called "chap-book culture", the culture of the semi-literate, who had gone to school but not for long. (English unfortunately lacks the distinction that Italians draw between *letteratura popolare* and *letteratura popolareggiante*.) This chap-book culture might be regarded as an early form of what the mid-twentieth century

support of his argument, the development across the same period of the so-called ‘consumer literature’ (*letteratura di consumo*).<sup>119</sup> In brief, according to Palmisciano, it is in the Hellenistic, and later in the Roman, periods that we encounter the more definitive rupture between what is termed nowadays ‘folk poetry’ and ‘literate poetry’.<sup>120</sup> Only since then would (oral) folksong and its poetic expressions have become part of an autonomous category, distinct from and somehow in opposition to (written) literature.

Palmisciano’s interpretation represents one of the consequences of the misleading understanding of folksong as a pure form of oral poetry, in direct opposition to literate poetry. It is unhelpful to simply say that Theocritus and other Hellenistic poets used elements that were *popolareggianti* in their literate works, in order to construct a sort of ‘consumer literature’ (more akin to forms of oral culture). In this classification there is no proper definition of folksong, but the acceptance of a definition based on preconceived contexts of origin and composition. The study of folk-like production is not to be dismissed,<sup>121</sup> but cannot be based on the bifurcated categories of ‘folk/popular’ and ‘literary’, even if mixed up in a hybrid product. Palmisciano’s view reflects the broader distinction between ‘popular’ (as ‘oral’) and ‘elite’ (as ‘literate’) cultures, a distinction which other scholars have seen take shape in the very same period and for similar reasons (e.g. because of the extensive use of writing).<sup>122</sup> Yet, we should be very sceptical about the oversimplified ‘before/after’ dichotomies, which presume a unified culture in the archaic and classical periods, which is in due course shattered in the

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American critic Dwight Macdonald called “midcult”.’. However, Palmisciano uses the term in a different sense, namely that of ‘fakelore’, ‘pseudo-folklore’ (cf. *supra* n. 52).

<sup>119</sup> On this modern concept and on the risk of applying similar ones to ancient Greek culture, without giving due attention to its contextual specificity in relation to the modern era, see Avlamis 2011: 70 with n. 15.

<sup>120</sup> This chronological watershed is also endorsed by Magnani 2013a: 570 (‘In definitiva, se rimane impossibile ridefinire come un tutto coerente i *carmina popularia*, [...], si può ribadire, se necessario, che una netta separazione fra letteratura popolare ed elitaria non si ebbe prima della età ellenistica’).

<sup>121</sup> Indeed, it will be partly undertaken in my commentary (see chapters to follow).

<sup>122</sup> Cf. e.g. Pretagostini (2000: 14): ‘Nel periodo ellenistico, dunque, anche per effetto dell’uso sempre più massiccio del mezzo scrittoria nella pubblicazione e fruizione del testo letterario, si manifesta per la prima volta, in maniera radicale e non meramente episodica, un fenomeno che sarà poi una costante delle società posteriori, il fenomeno per cui la cultura, che finora era stata espressione e patrimonio di un’intera comunità, si scinde in due culture, l’una, quella della classe dirigente, innovative ed elitaria, l’altra, quella delle classi subalterne, tradizionale e di massa: anche per questo aspetto l’età ellenistica risulta assimilabile, almeno per quanto attiene alla realtà culturale, più all’età moderna che alla grecità arcaica e classica.’ See also Pretagostini 1988: 290-292; Pretagostini 2000: 12-16; Gentili 2006: 262-265.

Hellenistic age to form a bifurcated culture, i.e. oral (folk) culture vs. literate (elite) culture. These dichotomies draw support from over-generalised time-schemes, which do not take into account the specifics of each historical period, but which have been applied without reservation, and without any contextualisation, to different ages.<sup>123</sup> Tensions between folk and elite cultures occur in all societies of all ages, as long as there exist elite groups that distance themselves from the masses. Undeniably, this was also the case in archaic and classical Greece.<sup>124</sup> However, it should be noticed that the tensions between folk and elite culture vary depending on social and cultural factors. Accordingly, the social and cultural changes of the Hellenistic period brought about complex and specific phenomena that triggered separation between folk and elite culture, phenomena that however cannot be reduced to a strict opposition between the ‘oral’ and the ‘written’.<sup>125</sup> I want to briefly expand this last point, first on a general level (§1.2.1.i), and in turn by looking at specific cases of ancient conceptualisations of ‘popular’ song or poetry (§1.2.1.ii).

### **1.2.1.i Institutions, textualisation, and local folklore**

To begin with, in exploring folk and elite culture in the Hellenistic period, we should not look at the categorical distinction between oral and written mentalities. Rather, we should consider those political and cultural institutions that gave rise to tensions between unofficial and authorised cultures.<sup>126</sup> This will lead us not to exclude writing from the processes of cultural institutionalisation, but to clarify that the use of writing belonged to a broader phenomenon of

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<sup>123</sup> Chartier (1995: 84-88) argues against ‘all chronological models that oppose a golden age of popular culture, original and independent, to a time of censure and constraints that disqualified and dismantled it’ (p. 84). The most consecrated scheme is that outlined by Burke (2009: 270), who considered the first half of the seventeenth century in Western Europe as the period of major rupture between a golden age of popular culture and an elite culture that subjugated it. Cf. also Avlamiš 2011: 80 n. 43, with further bibliography (‘there is no definite historical point of a divorce between elite and popular culture; narrowly historicizing accounts that emphasize before/after dichotomies exaggerate the role of each historical period and the conceptual separation of elite groups from the rest of the society’).

<sup>124</sup> Cf. e.g. Forsdyke 2012; Ma 2016.

<sup>125</sup> For instance, Hunter (1996: 7) points out that ‘No cliché for ancient cultural history is more familiar than the increasing separation of “popular” and “elite” culture in the Hellenistic period. [...] The difference between the two cultures are not always easy to define, particularly because of our woeful ignorance of the wider musical and poetic world.’

<sup>126</sup> On the importance of institutional elements in the conceptualisation of popular culture, see Parker 2011 (cf. *supra* n. 73).

‘textualisation’, which primarily involved song-texts and song culture. Examples of large repertoires of songs that were textualised during this time will be observed in the local historiography and antiquarianism of the Hellenistic age.

After the conquests of Alexander the Great, Greek culture and Greek identity became dominant in claiming a superior cultural status: being Greek meant to be the possessor of a richer, and ‘higher’ culture. After the death of Alexander in 323, we observe the creation of political, economic and cultural centres such as Ephesus, Pergamum, and, most of all, Alexandria, which competed for cultural and intellectual dominance. The production of culture (including art, music and literature) was sponsored by the various courts in an attempt to proclaim their Greekness, and in so doing to exhibit their higher cultural standing. This Hellenistic cultural production depended on royal patronage and reflected larger imperial ambitions. Such dynamics resulted in the institutionalisation of (Greek) *paideia*, which represented the official (elite) culture of the ruling classes.<sup>127</sup> What was left outside the institutionalised channels represented, in contrast, the unauthorised (folk) culture of the masses (cf. §1.2.1.ii).

On the one side, musical and dramatic performances were included in the official culture of the elite. These performances took place at court or in the many Panhellenic festivals sponsored by the imperial institutions, such as the ‘grand procession’ of Ptolemy Philadelphus in Alexandria (inspired by the fifth-century Athenian Great Dionysia). The performers were usually professional artists, banded together in associations (e.g. the guilds of Dionysiac *Technitai*) imposed from the top by the governments.<sup>128</sup> On the other side, the official culture of the elite was expressed through literary discourse, that prevailed in cultural centres such as the famous Museum and the library in Alexandria (modelled on Plato’s Academy and Aristotle’s Lyceum). Such cultural institutions contained a storehouse of texts, which were not only collected there for future reperformance or reading, but also catalogued, studied and commented upon as objects of scholarly exegesis. This impulse to categorise and collect reflected the expression of a new archival mentality, anticipated in the intellectual culture of classical Athens, and contributing to the rise of the ancient ‘literary’ criticism.<sup>129</sup> It was at the end of the fifth century BC, and then in the Hellenistic period, that – as modern scholarship

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<sup>127</sup> See Goldhill 1999: 61; Whitmarsh 2004: 122-158.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. Le Guen 2001.

<sup>129</sup> See Thomas 1989: 15-94; Thomas 1992: 14, 96; Whitmarsh 2004: 106-121.



argues – the methodological and theoretical bases had been laid for the future foundation of the modern category of ‘literature’.

One clarification at this point is certainly needed. Literature is a modern concept that for ease of reference we tend to use when studying ancient Greek texts as well.<sup>130</sup> However, the ancient Greeks never had a conception or definition of literature equivalent to ours.<sup>131</sup> Therefore, the question spontaneously arises whether and to what extent we can speak of literature in ancient Greek culture. Once again, it cannot simply be said that, after the advent of book and archival culture, a clear-cut division between ‘oral poetry’ and ‘literature’ was clearly established in the Hellenistic period. The gulf between orality and literacy is not as deep as the studies of oral poetry originally indicated (cf. §1.1.2.i). As for ancient Greek culture as well, the views arguing for the mutual incompatibility of ‘oral’ and ‘literate’ mentalities have rightly been deemphasised.<sup>132</sup> As Thomas especially shows, stress ought rather to be placed on the interaction between oral communication and writing, the latter also being assumed in the composition and transmission of some archaic and classical Greek poetry.<sup>133</sup> This is not to overlook the specifics of oral culture in the archaic and classical periods, and the importance of performance, context and occasional function in the study of Greek lyric poetry, but rather to stress that the use, perception, and interaction between orality and writing were constantly changing over the centuries in ancient Greece. From the end of the fifth century BC, writing was put to new uses, a new archival mentality arose, and texts, including song-texts, began to be collected and textualised. Later in the Hellenistic period, we observe the full realisation of the process of ‘textualisation’, as it has been christened by Ford (2003). This process represented a crucial step that fostered the idea of ‘literature’, and it consisted in new approaches and perspectives in the study, reception, and fruition of song (Ford 2003: 18f.):

I will ask when did the Greeks begin to read their own ‘literature’, and when do we find them taking up song texts and going through them (silently or aloud) as a way of fully experiencing and enjoying the benefits song was thought to offer? The passage of song from performance event to the object of such reading I call ‘textualisation’ to distinguish

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<sup>130</sup> Cf. *supra* n. 70.

<sup>131</sup> On the absence of a singular definition of literature in ancient Greek culture, see De Vries 1983; Goldhill 1999; Whitmarsh 2004: 3-17; Heath 2004; Ercolani 2014: 8-10; Nicolai 2014: 44 with n. 26; Feeney 2016: 152-160.

<sup>132</sup> See the fundamental studies of Rosalind Thomas (1989; 1992).

<sup>133</sup> Cf. also Ford 2003: 20; Budelmann 2009: 7-10.

it from transcription, or the simple writing down of the words of a song. The mere existence of song texts does not tell us much about the uses to which they were put. The evidence will suggest that songs were increasingly textualised in the period from Simonides to Plato; this is not to say that songs were being written down with greater frequency in this period, but that their transcriptions were being put to new uses – as works of art to be enjoyed in private reading and not as scripts or promptbooks to be memorized for performance and reused in social contexts. Allowing that our evidence is slim, I shall argue that it is significant that only very late in the fifth century do we find songs being approached, studied, and enjoyed in the form of texts – fixed and isolated verbal constructs demanding a special form of appreciation and analysis.<sup>134</sup>

The increasing textualisation of song through the fifth century BC, and the consequent shift from ‘song’ to ‘poem’, provided the backdrop for the important cultural changes which occurred in ancient Greek literary discourse over the following centuries, and which duly then had such significant implications for the future of modern Western culture. The key driver of textualisation lies not in the increasing use of writing, but in the fact that writing itself was put to new uses. By then, a song-text could be removed from the social and occasional context that had shaped it and be analysed as a self-standing object, which contains its autonomous meaning and unity in its forms.<sup>135</sup> The primary focus in the evaluation of song was no longer social and ethical values, but rather on a song’s intrinsic formal properties. A song-text could thus be read and studied exclusively from the point of view of its form and content, e.g. in terms of its diction and patterns of language. In this sense, therefore, ‘song’ became ‘poem’. This should not urge us to think again in terms of strict oppositions. Oral culture and the importance of songs performed on a social occasion with a specific social function persisted even later than the classical period.<sup>136</sup> Moreover, formal and aesthetic qualities were not altogether ignored in the archaic evaluation of song, and moral and social values were not entirely overlooked by post-classical critics.<sup>137</sup> However, the process of textualisation abetted the creation of what might be considered a more coherent literary system, in which song-texts are used and perceived as

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<sup>134</sup> Cf. also Ford 2002: 155-157.

<sup>135</sup> As for politics and public oratory, Thomas (1989: 15-94; 1992: 14, 96) speaks of a ‘document-minded approach’ in fifth-century BC Athens.

<sup>136</sup> Cf. e.g. Chaniotis 2009 (and further contributions in Martinelli 2009) and 2013; LeVen 2014; D’Alessio 2017.

<sup>137</sup> Heath 2004: 65f.

written texts, or, in other words, as tangible and fixed documents. Inevitably, textualisation also laid the groundwork for the origins of literary criticism, of which Aristotle's *Poetics* is the most conspicuous monument.<sup>138</sup> Many other aspects also contributed to this process: e.g. the considerations of the Sophists on a theoretical level and the rise of prose on the side of literary praxis,<sup>139</sup> the formations of evaluative (as well as performative) canons,<sup>140</sup> and the role of schooling.<sup>141</sup>

What did the process of textualisation entail for the study of ancient Greek folksong tradition? As we have seen, the transition from song to poem must not be reduced to a mere opposition between oral and literate mentalities. At the same time, we cannot completely speak in terms of a generalising distinction between oral folk-poetry vs. literate poetry; this is a modern imposition, which cannot be discerned in ancient Greek culture. Rather, we should reflect upon the impact that textualisation and related cultural innovations had on song-texts, including those that are going to be analysed as folk songs in the present thesis. My questions will be: Were ancient Greek folk songs included in the literary system of ancient Greek culture? In other words, were they used, read and studied as written, fixed texts? Before providing the answers to these two questions, what we first need is a clearer definition of folksong, which is generally applicable to the ancient Greek folksong tradition (cf. §1.3).

For the moment, it is opportune to stress that, throughout the Hellenistic period, we find an increasing interest for musical traditions that are not concerned with a Panhellenic ideology, within the context of local historiography and antiquarianism.<sup>142</sup> Local customs, cultic and otherwise, are discussed in many fragments of Hellenistic Greek historiography (with antecedents), and sometimes even cultural items such as proverbs and song-texts are recorded, transcribed and even adopted in the historical narrative for specific purposes.<sup>143</sup> Two observations in this connection can be made. First, if we interpret the Hellenistic interest in local traditions as the interest in those epichoric customs and traditions that lie outside the main

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<sup>138</sup> Cf. e.g. Ford 2002: 272-293. On ancient literary criticism, cf. Hunter 2009 and the most recent volume published by Grethlein and Rengakos (2017).

<sup>139</sup> Cf. e.g. Ford 2002: 229-249; Nicolai 2014a.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. e.g. Nicolai 2014.

<sup>141</sup> Cf. e.g. Ford 2003: 24-30.

<sup>142</sup> For a list of Hellenistic historiographical sources interested in local musical traditions, see Restani 2009.

<sup>143</sup> Some examples are given in Tober 2013: 237-253 (on the use of proverbs in Samian local historiography); 415-419 (on the use of musical traditions in the histories of Heraclea).

cultural and political centres of the Hellenistic empires, local historiography and antiquarianism of the Hellenistic period can be said to represent an invaluable source of ancient local folklore, understood as unofficial, non-institutionalised culture (cf. *supra*). Second, and stemming from this first observation, in the local historiography and antiquarianism of the Hellenistic period we can find many examples of ‘textualised’ songs, which in turn became part of monumental textual archives made available for future reference. This second point seems to be confirmed by the very texts collected in the *carmina popularia* and by the kinds of sources that transmitted them to us. The two major sources of the *carmina popularia* are Athenaeus and Plutarch, who transmit 7 (PMG 847-853) and 8 (PMG 867-874) texts respectively.<sup>144</sup> As we know, Athenaeus and Plutarch, in turn, relied on direct or indirect sources, and, as often occurs in the case of the *carmina popularia* that these two authors transmit, their sources can be pinpointed in the local historiography and antiquarianism of the Hellenistic period or in their direct antecedents, i.e. the various Peripatetic *Constitutions*.<sup>145</sup> Besides, some of the *carmina popularia* are clearly presented in relation to their specific geographical distribution: PMG 853 is an example of Locrian song that was also widespread all over Phoenicia, PMG 854 is a prayer of the Athenians, PMG 864 is a dance song of the Spartans, PMG 869 is a grinding song heard in Eresus, and PMG 871 is a cult song performed by the women of Elis.<sup>146</sup>

A huge amount of local songs and traditions – which were presumably felt, to some extent, to represent part of a non-institutionalised (epichoric) culture – were therefore collected and transcribed in the Hellenistic period, continuing and furthering the process of textualisation that had begun from the end of the fifth century BC. Accordingly, song-texts that had been and were still orally performed in different contexts became available to be read, studied and analysed as proper texts or poems, being included in what can be seen as an emergent literary system. This aspect needs to be taken into account in the interpretation of ancient Greek folksong. As I shall show in the chapters to follow, folk songs could be textualised and sometimes read in a non-folk mode.

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<sup>144</sup> On the texts quoted by Plutarch, see Pordomingo 1991. On Plutarch’s *Greek Questions* and *Roman Questions* as a source of ancient folklore, see Anderson 2006.

<sup>145</sup> See e.g. PMG 847 (*ap. Semus Historicus FGrH 396 F 14; infra §4.3.1*), PMG 848 (*ap. Thgn. Hist. FGrH 526 F 1; infra §2.1*), PMG 849 (*ap. Semus Historicus FGrH 396 F 23, infra §3.1*), PMG 851 (*ap. Semus Historicus FGrH 396 F 24; infra §4.1.1*), PMG 867 (*ap. Duris Historicus FGrH 76 F 71*), PMG 868 (*ap. Arist. fr. 490.1 G.; infra §4.3.4*), PMG 873 (*ap. Arist. fr. 44 G.*).

<sup>146</sup> On PMG 854, 864 and 871, cf. Ch. 4. On PMG 869, see §3.2.

### 1.2.1.ii Ancient conceptualisations of ‘popular’ poetry

Conceptualisations and categorisations denoting ‘popular’ compositions existed even in antiquity. The terms adopted are varied (e.g. δημόδης, δημοτικός, δημόσιος, δημότερος, δαμώματα) and are mostly related to the word δῆμος, which may clearly indicate the ‘commons’ as opposed to the ‘elite’.<sup>147</sup> Most of these terms, along with the passages in which they are mentioned, have already been discussed by modern scholars, but are generally dismissed as ‘false friends’ and non-equivalent to the modern categories of folksong or popular poetry.<sup>148</sup> In fact, they will prove to be rather difficult friends but friends nonetheless. Of course, the ancients do not seem to have elaborated a comprehensive theory of folklore and folksong as the one we have seen emerge in the nineteenth century (cf. §1.1.1). Nor can we say that in antiquity there existed cultural forms that were both mass-produced and mass-consumed (popular culture as ‘culture industry’, cf. §1.1.2). However, we can observe, at least since the end of the classical period, various conceptualisations of popular ‘literature’, based on different perspectives but all with the exclusive sense of ‘mass consumed’. More importantly, these conceptualisations implied not so much a clear-cut separation between oral and literate poetry, but rather signalled those tensions that have been analysed above between institutionalised and non-institutionalised cultures. The texts (and song-texts) that were part of the institutionalised education of the elite were contrasted with those that were not. This entails a fluid conception of the categorisation of ‘popular poetry’ in antiquity, which could vary greatly depending on *who* was using *what*: whether the few and the ‘educated’ (the πεπαιδευμένοι), or the masses or the ordinary people (the ἰδιῶται), that were learning poetry.

As mentioned above, the institutional construction of literature and poetry (including poetry composed for performance) served as a socially empowering practice in the Hellenistic age (and beyond). A major political role of Hellenistic (and imperial) literature was to justify prevalent social hierarchies and the cultural superiority of the elite. The learned were distinct from the masses because the former were exposed to the Panhellenic, institutionalised *paideia*.<sup>149</sup> A landmark poetic manifesto of the socially distinctive function of education and literature can be found in Callimachus – one of the most exemplary poet-scholars at the Library

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<sup>147</sup> On δῆμος and the δῆμος-related terms listed above, see *DGE* s.v.

<sup>148</sup> Neri 2003: 194f.; Palmisciano 2003: 154 n. 6; Yatromanolakis 2009: 265; Magnani 2013a: 560f. Only Lelli (2014: 29-31) is more inclined to interpret the ancient terminology in a similar way to the modern perception of ‘popular’.

<sup>149</sup> Cf. Whitmarsh 2004: 142-148.

of Alexandria – when he states: ‘I hate all that is demotic’ (Callim. *Epigr.* 28.4 Pf. σικχαίνω πάντα τὰ δημόσια). Here the term δημόσια refers to the sphere of the δῆμος, understood as the common people (the masses and the uneducated), as opposed to the elite (the few and the learned), of which Callimachus considered himself a part.<sup>150</sup> Interestingly, in another (very fragmentary) passage, Callimachus (*Ia.* 16 fr. 228.70-74 Pf.) seems to use the similar word δημότερος to draw a distinction between the funeral laments widespread among the ordinary people and those composed for the great figures of the Ptolemaic court (such as his own composition?):

θρήνοι πόλιν ὑμετέρ[αν  
οὐχ ὥς ἐπὶ δαμοτ[έρων  
χθών· ἀλλὰ τι τῶ[ν] μεγάλων ἐ[,  
τάν τοι μίαν οἰχομ[ένα]ν ὁμόδελφον [αὐτάν  
κλαίοντι.

your city (is full of) laments [...]  
not as though a person of lower rank (were dead?), [...]  
but one of the great ones [...]  
they are weeping over your one and only sister dead.<sup>151</sup>

The intellectual status of literature as patronised by the Hellenistic courts (and reflected in Callimachean poetics) can be further stressed by a brief comparison with an example from the earlier archaic period. The choral poetry of the archaic age did not pursue a strategy of distinction but was rather intended to convey a moment of collective learning. Callimachus’s declaration ‘I hate δημόσια’ can be contrasted with another poetic manifesto, this time of Alcman (*PMGF* 17):

καί ποκά τοι δώσω τρίποδος κύτος  
ᾧ κ’ ἔνι <...> †λε† ἀγείρης·  
ἀλλ’ ἔτι νῦν γ’ ἄπυρος, τάχα δὲ πλέος  
ἔτνεος, οἶον ὁ παμφάγος Ἀλκμὰν

<sup>150</sup> See Whitmarsh 2004: 136.

<sup>151</sup> Transl. Trypanis 1975: 169 (slightly adapted). The speaker is Charis, friend of Philotera, who is in turn the sister of the Ptolemaic queen Arsinoë II, to whom Callimachus’ composition is dedicated. Charis is announcing to her friend her sister’s death.

ἡράσθη χλιαρὸν πεδὰ τὰς τροπὰς·  
οὔτι γὰρ ἀδὸν τετυγμένον<sup>152</sup> ἔσθαι,  
ἀλλὰ τὰ κοινὰ<sup>153</sup> γάρ, ὥπερ ὁ δᾶμος,  
ζατεύει.

Some day I shall give you a great tripod bowl,  
in which <...> you may collect.  
It has still not been over a fire, but soon  
it will be full of pea-soup, the kind that Alcman, who eats everything,  
loves hot after the solstice:  
he eats no delicacies  
but looks for common fare like the people.<sup>154</sup>

By means of a culinary metaphor, Alcman seems to detect a tension between compositions that are more sophisticated and more common ways of communication. He offers to his audience his poetry, and not disdainfully, as a common dish. Alcman is aware that his poetry is intended for a public performance, and accordingly, he aspires to a form of communication that is not individualistic, but responsive to the community's needs.<sup>155</sup> The same awareness also seems to occur in two passages of Stesichorus and Pindar respectively. In Stesich. *PMGF* 212.1, the Chorus sings 'popular songs' (δαμώματα),<sup>156</sup> which is interpreted by the Aristophanic scholium that transmits it as merely descriptive, denoting 'songs performed before an audience' (δαμώματα δὲ τὰ δημοσίᾳ ᾄδόμενα).<sup>157</sup> I think we can assume here a

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<sup>152</sup> Corr. Page (οὐ τετυγμένον codd.).

<sup>153</sup> Corr. Casaubon (καινὰ codd.).

<sup>154</sup> Transl. Campbell 1988: 411 (slightly adapted). On this text, cf. Pizzocaro 1990; Palmisciano 2003: 162; Palmisciano 2007: 42f.; Magnani 2013a: 560 n. 69 (with further bibliography).

<sup>155</sup> Cf. also Alcman. *PMGF* 119 ταῦτα μὲν ὥς κεν ὁ δᾶμος ἅπας 'this as the whole people (would do?)'.

<sup>156</sup> Stesich. *PMGF* 212 (= fr. 173 Finglass) τοιάδε χρὴ Χαρίτων δαμώματα καλλικόμων / ὑμνεῖν Φρύγιον μέλος ἐξευρόντας ἀβρῶς / ἥρος ἐπερχομένου ('Such are the songs of the fair-tressed Graces that we must sing, devising a Phrygian melody in refined comfort, at spring's approach', transl. Davies–Finglass 2014: 495).

<sup>157</sup> *Schol. Ar. Pax* 796-801 τοιάδε χρὴ Χαρίτων δα-/μώματα καλλικόμων / τὸν σοφὸν ποιητὴν / ὑμνεῖν, ὅταν ἡρινὰ μὲν / φωνῇ χελιδῶν / ἐζομένη κελαδῇ. Here Stesichorus' passage is adapted by the Semi-Chorus in the Aristophanic parabasis (cf. Olson 1998: 228). Some lines earlier (734-764) Aristophanes, by means of the coryphaeus, boasts that he has been the first to remove from comedy a repertory of trivialities mocking the ordinary people – such as slaves, women and little people with no great influence (ιδιώτας ἀνθρωπίσκους) – and that,

stronger connotation, by considering the δαμώματα of Stesichorus as songs ‘composed (and performed) for the sake of the collectivity’. Still further, in Pind. *Isthm.* 8.7s. παυσάμενοι δ’ ἀπράκτων κακῶν / γλυκύ τι δαμωσόμεθα καὶ μετὰ πόνον (‘Having ceased from insurmountable troubles, / we will sing something sweet for the people, even after toil’),<sup>158</sup> the Chorus is likewise conscious that they are going to ‘speak for the community’ (δημόομαι).<sup>159</sup>

This more communal and egalitarian poetics voiced by the earlier and later archaic choral lyric is abandoned in the Hellenistic age, when literature and poetry became the tools by which to formulate the elite identity. As detected above in the Callimachean passages, the conditions were created for a distinction between mass-consumed compositions (‘popular songs’) and the compositions intended for the elite, i.e. the few and learned. The first signs of such an opposition in the Athenian cultural context can be found towards the end of the classical period,<sup>160</sup> when Socrates, at the beginning of the Platonic *Phaedo* (60e-61b), contrasts the μουσική μεγίστη (i.e. philosophy), to which he aspires, with the μουσική δημώδης, which seems to include all sorts of songs, musical performances and poetic texts.<sup>161</sup> Another δῆμος-related word adopted by the Platonic Socrates is δημόομαι in *Tht.* 161e ταῦτα πῶς μὴ φῶμεν δημούμενον λέγειν τὸν Πρωταγόραν; (‘Must we not believe that Protagoras was “playing to the gallery” in saying this?’).<sup>162</sup> Here the verb is used in the sense of ‘talking for mass audiences’,<sup>163</sup> in relation to Protagoras’ famous dictum that ‘man is the measure of all things’, which Socrates condemns as a dictum conceived for an audience that is unable to penetrate high philosophical truths. The Platonic use of these δῆμος-related terms (δημώδης and δημόομαι) can be connected to the broader polemics against mob culture and mass psychology, of which Plato was one of the most fervent voices, and which took as its main targets the performances

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instead, the main targets of his attacks are the powerful (μέγιστοι). To some extent, Aristophanes too recognises his poetry as δαμώματα, but with a more satirical, and politically charged, edge (cf. also Lelli 2014: 29).

<sup>158</sup> Transl. Race 1997: 209.

<sup>159</sup> On δημόομαι, see *DGE* s.v.

<sup>160</sup> ‘In an age where elite wealth and leadership were increasingly subject to democratic control, the maintenance of class distinction depended increasingly upon claims of ethical and cultural superiority’ (Csapo 2004: 236).

<sup>161</sup> Socrates mentions two examples of the latter: the metrical versions of Aesop’s fables and a hymn to Apollo.

<sup>162</sup> Transl. Fowler 1921: 77.

<sup>163</sup> By contrast, in Pind. *Isthm.* 8.8, the same verb δημόομαι has a positive meaning (cf. *supra*).



of the theatre and the poetics of the New Music.<sup>164</sup> Interestingly, Aristoxenus (fr. 124 Wehrli), another fourth-century opponent of the innovations of the New Music, complains that only few (cultivated) men may remember what music was like in the good old days, when music was indeed very different from the current degeneracy, which he refers to as ‘people’s music’ (πάνδημος μουσική).<sup>165</sup>

No doubt under the influence of Plato’s strictures, we can detect in the perception of the learned a growing dichotomy between elite culture, primarily represented by philosophy (and philosophers), and popular culture, expressed for example in the theatrical genres to which mass audiences were attracted. A similar opposition was still operative in the imperial age and could involve identical categories of texts (such as the Homeric poems), which were perceived as ‘popular’ if used in certain social contexts, but as ‘intellectual’ and ‘educative’ if used in others.<sup>166</sup> Recalling the Platonic distinction between philosophy (μουσική μεγίστη) and mass-consumed poetry (μουσική δημόδης), Strabo (1.2.8) observes that, whereas philosophy addresses the few, poetry, especially the poetry of Homer, is ‘of greater public benefit’ (δημοφελεστέρα) and thus is more capable of filling theatres.<sup>167</sup> However, his close-contemporary, the philosopher and orator Dio Chrysostom bestows a lofty status upon Homeric poetry in his second discourse *On Kingship* (2.5). The reason for this lies in the fact that Homer is suitable to the education of a king, unlike other compositions (e.g. those by Phocylides and

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<sup>164</sup> See Ford 2002: 282-286; Csapo 2004 (esp. 235-245). Cf. also Plut. [De Mus.] 1136b, Ath. 14.631e-633c.

<sup>165</sup> Aristox. fr. 124 Wehrli (*ap.* Ath. 14.632b) ἐπειδὴ καὶ τὰ θεάτρα ἐκβεβαρβάρωται καὶ εἰς μεγάλην διαφθορὰν προελήλυθεν ἡ πάνδημος αὕτη μουσική, καθ’ αὐτοὺς γενόμενοι ὀλίγοι ἀναμνησκόμεθα οἷα ἦν ἡ μουσική, ‘for our theatres have been barbarized, and popular music itself has been utterly degraded, and only a few of us recall privately what music was once like’ (transl. Olson 2011: 197). See also D’Angour 2006: 104.

<sup>166</sup> Even the complex and embroidered melodies of the New Musician Timotheus, criticised by the conservatives of the fourth century BC, had become ‘classics’ a few centuries later, when they were included in the musical repertoires of famous Hellenistic artists (Chanotis 2009: 85f.), or when they were performed (along the tunes of Philoxenus) by Choruses of trained Arcadian boys, as we are told at Polyb. 4.20.8-9. See D’Angour 2006: 104; D’Alessio 2017: 256f., 260.

<sup>167</sup> Str. 1.2.8 αὕτη μὲν οὖν πρὸς ὀλίγους, ἡ δὲ ποιητικὴ δημοφελεστέρα καὶ θεάτρα πληροῦν δυναμένη· ἡ δὲ δὴ τοῦ Ὀμήρου ὑπερβαλλόντως, ‘Yet the latter [*scil.* philosophy] is for the few, but poetry, especially that of Homer, is more for public use and is able to fill a theatre’ (transl. Roller 2014: 52). In this passage (cf. also Cavallo 2007: 560), Strabo is more broadly contrasting the contemporary educational system (ἀγωγή), based on the writing of history and on philosophy, with the ancient practice of learning myths and poetry. The latter genres would be more appealing to ‘every simple and uneducated private man’ (καὶ ἰδιώτης δὲ πᾶς καὶ ἀπαίδευτος), as well as to ‘a crowd of women and of ordinary people as a whole’ (ὄχλον γε γυναικῶν καὶ παντὸς χυδαίου πλήθους).

Theognis), which Dio calls ‘popular’ (δημοτικά), since ‘they give advice and admonition to the masses (τοῖς πολλοῖς) and to private citizens (καὶ ἰδιώταις)’.<sup>168</sup> Interestingly, a *carmen popolare* (PMG 856) is quoted by Dio a few lines later (2.59), not as another example of a ‘mass-consumed’ song (δημοτικόν), but as a further composition suitable (it being a composition related to warfare) to the royal education.

The apparent contradiction in Strabo’s and Dio’s passages actually confirms that the ancient conceptualisation of ‘popular poetry’ primarily denoted contexts in which songs were performed by and/or for a broad audience that elite sources would refer to as the *demos*. Therefore, Homer, if performed in the theatre before mass audiences, could be perceived as ‘popular’. At the same time, however, Homer could also represent a text affirming the elite’s cultural superiority. As such, Homer was included in the institutionalised education of the most eminent figures of the imperial elite, including the king/emperor, and it could in turn be contrasted with other ‘mass-consumed’ (δημοτικά) songs. Similar conceptualisations of ‘popular’ can be assumed in two other (near contemporary) cases. First, an anonymous refrain to Apollo-Sun (PMG 860) is called by the erudite Heraclitus (*All.* 6.6) δημῶδες, and second, four lines of Aristophanes’ *Acharnians* (524-527) are defined as περιβόητα καὶ δημῶδη στιχίδια by Plutarch (*Vit. Per.* 30.4). Now, most scholars have taken the adjective δημῶδης in both of these passages merely in the sense of ‘famous’, ‘well-known’.<sup>169</sup> However, in light of the considerations we have noted above, we can suppose a stronger connotation of them, closer to the sense of ‘popular’, ‘mass consumed’. The refrain to Apollo-Sun and the Aristophanic lines were likely to be perceived as ‘popular’ not only because they were already known far and wide, but more specifically, because they were used, reused and overused by ordinary people in their every-day lives, even though the exact contexts of such use and consumption are now unknown.<sup>170</sup> The term δημῶδη in the Plutarchan passage, for example, has appositely been translated as ‘hackneyed’ (Perrin 1916: 89).

All these cases relating to the ancient conceptualisation of the term ‘popular’ point towards two central points. Firstly, they confirm that no clear distinction existed throughout

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<sup>168</sup> Transl. Cohoon 1932: 53 (ἴσως δέ τινα αὐτῶν καὶ δημοτικά λέγοιτ’ ἄν, συμβουλευόντα καὶ παραινούντα τοῖς πολλοῖς καὶ ἰδιώταις, καθάπερ οἶμαι τὰ Φωκυλίδου καὶ Θεόγνιδος). Alexander the Great (here Dio’s mouthpiece) is speaking, as well as answering his father’s (Philip of Macedon) question of why he is so eager to learn Homer. On the possibility that Dio’s discourse was performed before an emperor (Trajan?), see Vagnone 2012: 206.

<sup>169</sup> Cf. e.g. Lambin 1992: 329; Campbell 1993: 247; Neri 2003: 194, 219; Pontani 2005: 69.

<sup>170</sup> On PMG 860, see §4.2.2.

antiquity between typologies such as oral poetry and literate poetry. Rather, the actual dichotomy, which became detectable from the end of the classical period, differentiated compositions that were intended for the elite, and as such were a part of the institutionalised education, from compositions that were available on a wider scale, and that were widespread among the ordinary people, across various contexts of use and consumption. This dichotomy is in step with the broader distinction delineated above (§1.2.1.i) between institutionalised and non-institutionalised cultures in the Hellenistic period. Secondly, we observe in the ancient sources not a fully worked out and coherent theory about popular song or popular poetry, but fluid categorisations, according to which even the same types of texts can be considered, on the one hand, ‘popular’ (when they appeared in contexts of mass consumption), and on the other hand, ‘highbrow’, if they were used to satisfy the cultural needs of the elite. My conceptualisation of folksong (see §1.3) will take into account this important aspect of fluidity – whereby a single text can be perceived as a folk song in one context but can also be read in a non-folk mode in another – as well as the various contexts of use and consumption in which such songs were performed. At the same time, however, I shall try to formulate a more coherent and structured theoretical framework in which to place the notion of folksong than have been assembled by previous editors. This notion will not depend on a mere (and sometimes ambiguous) opposition between the consumption of poetry by the masses and by the elite, but will describe more specific modalities of the perception and reception of song performances.

### 1.2.2 The *carmina popularia* as lowbrow poetry

Much scholarly interpretation of the *carmina popularia* is grounded in evaluating criteria of sophistication. By most people’s reckoning, the *carmina popularia* would represent lowbrow poetry, composed by and for the unlearned masses. These texts would betray non-complex syntactic structures, would be characterised by unelaborated connections or by a lack of connectives at all, and would feature figures of repetition, a diction suited to the actions or objects of everyday life, as well as simple and basic rhythms. The *carmina popularia* would thus convey basic feelings through basic forms. Basic style and simplicity are commonly recognised as the universal features of folk poetry all over the world and across all ages.<sup>171</sup> As I have mentioned above (§1.1.2.ii), such a view hides behind it an *a priori* assumption, which is not confirmed by the available evidence, but which instead misleads us into agreeing to

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<sup>171</sup> On similar views, in addition to Pordomingo 1996 (*passim*), cf. also Adrados 2007 (*passim*) and Yatromanolakis 2009: 268-270.

preconceived contexts of the folksongs' origins and compositions. In the following chapters, my textual analysis will show that a peculiar 'lowbrow' style cannot be ascertained in the *carmina popularia*. The same features that have been assumed to determine the universal style of folk poetry occur, in fact, across a much wider array of texts.<sup>172</sup> For instance, paratactic structures and figures of repetition are familiar in both classical lyric and its Hellenistic imitations.<sup>173</sup> Interestingly, ancient scholars have pinpointed linguistic and rhetorical techniques such as asyndeton and repetition in the so-called 'grand' style (as opposed to the 'plain' style), which did not identify with a universal 'folk' style, but which rather distinguished the 'performative style' (λέξις ἀγωνιστική) from the 'written style' (λέξις γραφική) in the type of speech that was being delivered.<sup>174</sup> As for the question of metre, the collection of the *carmina popularia* is characterised by both a large variety of different rhythms and schemes, some of which are irregular and elsewhere unattested, and the complete absence of strophic structures.<sup>175</sup> Nonetheless, most of the Aeolic cola as well as that of the iambic, anapaestic and trochaic sequences which appear in the *carmina popularia* find many parallels in texts outside the collection.<sup>176</sup>

The *carmina popularia* (and the folksong genre as a whole) cannot be defined as a specific and universal textual category on the basis of their own formal elements. Formal criteria and texture can prove helpful in the interpretation of folksong, but they need to be placed within a methodological framework that is not based on preconceived contexts of origin and composition. Criteria such as basic style and simplicity do not necessarily result in lowbrow, unsophisticated poetry, and they may instead point to particular modes of use and reception (cf. §1.3.2). As has been pointed out by Avlamis (2011: 76), '[c]omplexity and sophistication are far from concrete concepts and they can be read into various practices'.<sup>177</sup> The strong measure of subjectivity underlying the criteria of sophistication may also be the cause of analytical inconsistency in terms of inclusion and exclusion among the various editions of the *carmina*

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<sup>172</sup> Cf. some examples in Neri 2003: 197f. with nn. 17-19.

<sup>173</sup> Cf. Gentili 2006: 79f.; Hunter 2003: 225.

<sup>174</sup> See Hunter 2003: 213-225, who also clarifies that the 'performative' and 'written' styles are not to be confused in terms of strict (and modern) oppositions between the 'oral' and the 'literate'.

<sup>175</sup> For an overview of metres that occur in the *carmina popularia*, see West, *GM* 146-149, and Magnani 2013a: 546-551.

<sup>176</sup> Cf. chapters to follow.

<sup>177</sup> Avlamis is here referring to the criteria commonly applied to the genre of the ancient novel (cf. *infra* n. 195).

*popularia*. By virtue of the various degrees of sophistication that are recognised, some scholars and editors have put forward arguments to remove, or have actually removed, some texts from the collection,<sup>178</sup> while others have argued for the inclusion of other texts that were previously excluded.<sup>179</sup> These very inconsistencies confirm the inadequacy of the criteria of sophistication in clearly determining what folksong is (and is not).

### 1.2.3 Anonymity in the *carmina popularia*

The *carmina popularia* are often interpreted in terms of their authorial anonymity. However, this concept is often used without any further clarification, and the question remains: In what sense or senses are they anonymous? Can we simply say that all anonymously transmitted texts are folk songs? Students and editors of the *carmina popularia* do not usually specify what they mean by anonymity, but the standard interpretations that we can unpack from the scattered and brief discussions available appear to be grounded in a polar opposition between anonymity and authoriality. This opposition results in two kinds of views, both of which descend from post-romantic conceptualisations (cf. §1.1.2.iii). On the one hand, anonymity is understood as communal authorship as opposed to individual composition.<sup>180</sup> On the other hand, anonymity loosely depends on the anonymous transmission of texts, in contrast with those texts that are transmitted together with their author's name.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> See e.g. Magnani 2013a: 566 and 570, with regard to *PMG* 850 (νόμος), 856 and 857 (ἐμβατήρια), 851a and b (ithyphallic and phallophoric songs, see ch. 4), 878 and 880 (funeral laments), 881 (ἐπιθαλάμιος). Magnani would rather include these songs among *adespota* that are classified according to genre. See also the Attic *eiresione*, generally excluded by the standard collections because of its hexametrical verses (cf. ch. 2), and *PMG* 867, not included by Diehl (1925) and Edmonds (1940) in their own editions (because they are considered too sophisticated?).

<sup>179</sup> Cf. e.g. Archil. fr. sp. 324 W.<sup>2</sup> (see §1.3.4) and Sapph. 168b V. (see Pordomingo 1996: 475 with n. 34, 479).

<sup>180</sup> Cf. e.g. Neri 2003: 196 (point a.).

<sup>181</sup> This kind of interpretation goes back at least to Köster (1831: 3-12), according to whom the *carmina popularia* belonged to a stage when poetry was composed by the common people, who lacked the expertise and the artistic skills of the later, well-known poets of Greek literature. As a result, the names of those 'folk' poets *ante litteram* (with very few exceptions) were not transmitted to us, and in such a sense, the *carmina popularia* were by their very nature anonymous. See e.g. Köster (1831: 9): 'Illud igitur constat, carmina popularia ab hominibus cantata esse, qui altioris poeticae artis expertes in numerum poetarum, qui proprie dicuntur, referri non possunt, quo fit, ut vulgo de eorum scriptore non constet, nisi forte casu aliquo, sive celebritate scriptoris aliunde acquisita, eius nomen ad nos pervenit.'

Now, with regard to the first view, the most evident sign of communal authorship would be represented by the textual variants. Hence, the *carmina popularia* are seen as ‘open texts’, subject to reworkings, adaptations, and transformations. However, as we have discussed above, textual fluidity and variants are traits that, even though they can be expected in the transmission of folk songs, are unlikely to occur in all circumstances. In addition to this, textual variation does not of course belong exclusively to the category of folksong. For instance, fluidity and textual variants constituted important components in the earliest stages of the transmission of ancient Greek epic poems.

Even more elusive is the simple opposition between authorial texts and texts transmitted without an author’s name, as can be observed in the editorial choices of the *carmina popularia*. Emblematic is the case of Alcman. *PMGF* 41. This fragment is presented by Plut. *De Alex. fort.* 2, 335a as a song of the Spartans, without mention of its author:

καὶ μαρτυρῆσαι τοῖς Σπαρτιάταις ἄδουσιν ῥέπει γὰρ ἅντα τῷ σιδάρῳ τὸ καλῶς  
κιθαρίσδεν’.

And thus confirmed [scil. Alexander] the testimony of the Spartiates, who used to sing,  
‘The noble playing of the lyre is meet to match the sword’.<sup>182</sup>

On the basis of this passage, Köster (1831: 5 n. 1) initially considered this song to be a *carmen popolare* in all respects. By contrast, all later editors excluded this fragment from their own collections of *carmina popularia*. The reason lies in another Plutarchan passage (*Vit. Lyc.* 21.6) – presumably unnoticed by Köster – where the same fragment is quoted as the song of the Spartan poet *par excellence*, Alcman:

Μουσικωτάτους γὰρ ἅμα καὶ πολεμικωτάτους ποφαίνουσιν αὐτούς· ῥέπει γὰρ ἅντα τῷ  
σιδάρῳ τὸ καλῶς κιθαρίσδεν’, ὡς ὁ Λακωνικὸς ποιητὴς εἶρηκε (Alcm. *PMGF* 41).

The Spartans are thus shown to be at the same time most musical and most warlike;  
‘The noble playing of the lyre is meet to match the sword’, as the Laconic poet [i.e. Alcman] has said.<sup>183</sup>

For the editors of the *carmina popularia*, an ancient Greek folk song cannot be attributed to an author from the canon of the nine lyric poets. For a folk song is by its nature anonymous,

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<sup>182</sup> Transl. Babbitt 1936: 431 (slightly adapted).

<sup>183</sup> Transl. Perrin 1914: 273 (slightly adapted).

that is to say, composed by some amateur, and thus unnamed, poet. This line of reasoning proceeds smoothly in the case of Alcman's fragment, since the name of a renowned author is indeed transmitted. But what if no name had been preserved? What about the possibility of a text that has been composed by a canonical poet but transmitted anonymously? If the second Plutarchan passage were unknown to us, in which collection would Alcman's fragment have been placed? Would it now be included in the *carmina popularia* (as Köster originally did), or would it occur in the so-called *adespota*? The task of answering these questions is not only difficult but also gives rise to further doubts: How many other cases like that of Alcman's fragment are hidden in the *corpora* of the *carmina popularia*? How many other songs, which are transmitted anonymously (as in the first passage of Plutarch), can, as a matter of fact, be traced back to an authorially clear, and indeed authoritative, authorship? Conversely, how many folk songs are 'hidden' in the so-called *adespota*? For example, we are left without a convincing explanation of why Page included the Spartan paean to the East Wind (Eurus) in the *carmina popularia* (PMG 858), and not the similarly constructed paean from Erythrae, placed instead among the *adespota* (PMG 934).<sup>184</sup>

The strict opposition between anonymous and authorial texts is thus shown to be unhelpful and arbitrary for framing the situation in ancient Greece, where, on the contrary, we find the pressing necessity of establishing authorship as a consequence of the so-called process of textualisation (cf. §1.2.1.i). This process entailed the collection and categorisation of a rich and varied tradition of ancient Greek songs, including anonymous songs, which, in the same way as authorial songs, were textualised and analysed as proper poems. To authenticate and authorise these song-texts *qua* texts, an author's name was sometimes needed. In the ancient sources, anonymous song traditions are frequently ascribed to mythical or historical authors, or in any case compared to authorial texts and genres.<sup>185</sup> Examples in this sense can be found in the *carmina popularia* themselves. As but one instance, the Peripatetic writer Clearchus of Soli, in Book II of the *Erotica* (fr. 33 Wehrli *ap.* Ath. 14.639a), says that there is no substantial

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<sup>184</sup> Cf. Brown 2002: 303. PMG 858 is preserved in a third-/second-century BC papyrus anthology of Greek texts (*P.Stras.* W.G. 306v II 13-30; cf. Fassino 1999: 45; Pordomingo 2013: 217-224; D'Alessio 2017: 236 n. 20), presumably originating from al-Hiba (see Falivene 2010). The purposes of this anthology are uncertain, as is the origin of the paean itself. Rutherford (2001: 45-7, 461) tentatively argues that PMG 858 is a late classical composition, which was performed to celebrate a military victory.

<sup>185</sup> For example, on the importance of authorship – whether real or fictional – in the ancient scholarly reception of archaic Greek cult poetry, see Pörtulas 2012, who concludes that '[t]he Greeks were not satisfied with a deliberately impersonal religious poetry, but felt a deep need for an author/*auctor*' (p. 241).

difference between erotic songs such as the so-called Locrian songs and the poems of Sappho and Anacreon (Κλέαρχος δὲ ἐν δευτέρῳ Ἑρωτικῶν τὰ ἐρωτικά φησιν ᾠσματα καὶ τὰ Λοκρικὰ καλούμενα οὐδὲν τῶν Σαπφοῦς καὶ Ἀνακρέοντος διαφέρειν). Here Clearchus is comparing an anonymous (and local) song tradition, a textual example of which is *carm. pop. PMG 853* (*ap. Ath. 15.697b-c*), with the compositions of two highly renowned lyric poets. Clearchus' view is justified by the fact that both types of compositions were seen and studied as poetic texts, belonging to the same genre of 'erotic songs'. Both the anonymous Locrian songs and the authorial poems of Sappho and Anacreon were subject to the same process of textualisation. Interestingly again, Clearchus, in Book I of the *Erotica* (fr. 32 Wehrli *ap. Ath. 14.619c-d*), reports an anecdote about a so-called 'pastoral song' (νόμιος), which a certain poetess Eriphanis had composed after she had hopelessly fallen in love with Menalcas, and which included the words 'The oaks are tall, Menalcas!' (*carm. pop. PMG 850* μακραὶ δρῦες, ὧ Μένάλκα). Modern scholars are probably right in supposing that Eriphanis was not the actual composer, but merely a character, of the song.<sup>186</sup> However, taken at face value, the ancient attribution of this otherwise anonymous song to a specific, albeit fictional, authorial figure confirms the importance of the element of authorship and the author's name in the ancient literary discourse.<sup>187</sup> This, in turn, stands at odds with the oversimplified modern dichotomy of anonymous 'folk' songs and authorial 'literate' poetry. If the texts labelled by the moderns as *carmina popularia* could be interpreted further in line with the perceptions of the ancients, as authored by an individual author, what does this entail for our interpretation of the folksong collections themselves?<sup>188</sup> In what sense can folk songs (and *carmina popularia*) still be considered 'anonymous'?

The anonymity criterion, understood in terms of binary oppositions – namely as communal authorship vs. individual composition or, more loosely, as anonymous song traditions vs. authorial texts – turns out to be illusory and elusive. Taken on its own, it does not advance our understanding of ancient Greek folksong, and on the contrary, it frequently complicates the matter further. Anonymity will continue to occupy a central role in my

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<sup>186</sup> See Neri 2003: 206f.

<sup>187</sup> The poetic activity of Eriphanis is described in technical terms, such as through the compound (ῆ) μελοποιός ('the lyric poetess') and the verb ποιέω 'compose, bis' (ὄθεν ἐποίησέ τε καὶ ποιήσασα κτλ.). On this kind of vocabulary in the ancient discussion of poetry and poets, see Ford 2002: 132-139.

<sup>188</sup> Other examples of *carmina popularia* attributed to renowned poets such as Tyrtaeus and Alcman are *PMG 856* and *857*.



conceptualisation of folksong, but it will be analysed from a range of different methodological and theoretical perspectives (cf. §1.3.4).

#### 1.2.4 Traditionality in the *carmina popularia*

Finally, the *carmina popularia* have been interpreted as traditional songs. The sense of this traditionality is the same as that has been adopted in modern conceptualisation of folksong, where the category of ‘tradition’ is generally associated with the idea of primitivism (cf. §1.1.2.iv). This idea of traditionality was already expressed in the ground-breaking publications of Ilgen (1797), Zell (1826) and Köster (1831).<sup>189</sup> In their views, the *carmina popularia* had given voice to the primeval spirit of the Hellenic people<sup>190</sup> and represented the earliest type of poetry, handed down relatively unchanged over the generations, and from which the canonical genres of Greek literature, from epic to lyric, from tragedy to comedy, had all stemmed.<sup>191</sup> Although primitivism and long tradition in relation to the conceptions of folksong have been widely dismissed as Romantic idealisations, some more recent scholarship still tends to see the *carmina popularia* as primitive songs belonging to a long-standing tradition. The most striking example is that of Adrados, who based his own investigations into the origins and developments of Greek lyric poetry upon this supposed enduring traditionality of the *carmina popularia*.<sup>192</sup> To critique his approach straightforwardly, he takes for granted that all texts included in *PMG* 847-883 constitute the corpus of these primitive, pre-literary song-texts, on which Sappho, Stesichorus, Alcman and all other lyric poets had originally drawn before forming their own individual poetics. Adrados’ view echoes most of the binary oppositions we have analysed so far: namely that the traditional folk song in ancient Greece would be orally and anonymously transmitted, as distinct from the highly developed, literate poetry of the great lyric poets. The idea of a long tradition extending far back to the very birth of literature not only conditioned Adrados’ approach, but also misled other scholars in his stead into placing the *carmina*

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<sup>189</sup> On these publications and the respective approaches towards them, see also Magnani 2013a: 567-569.

<sup>190</sup> We also find here the national character of *Volks poesie*, a trait peculiar to the Romantic conceptualisation. This trait is still echoed in Lambin (1992: 378), who defines folksong as the kind of song that expresses, sings the soul of a people (‘Une chanson populaire – le concept est finalement assez clair, bien que nous ne soyons toujours pas capable de bien expliciter –, est d’abord une œuvre où s’exprime, où *chante* ce qu’on peut appeler l’âme d’un peuple ou d’un groupe social, conscient de son unité, dans une circonstance particulière – deuil, mariage, travail, fête, guerre, jeu, banquet, etc.’).

<sup>191</sup> On similar views, see also Ritschel (1866) and Cerrato (1885, see esp. pp. 193f. and 365-368).

<sup>192</sup> Cf. Adrados 2007 (originally published in 1976), whose thesis is accepted by Pordomingo (1996: 463).

*popularia* in an undefined, primitive period (earlier than the archaic and classical periods), without any firm or conclusive argumentation. In my commentary to the single texts, I shall show that some poems may have a history and derive from later periods.

It is interesting to notice that, even in antiquity, we can find similar perceptions of ‘traditionality’ relating to an undefined, often distant past. This is the case, for example, of the begging song *PMG* 848, which was said to be customary to sing in Rhodes (διὰ τὸ εἰωθὸς ἐπιφωνεῖσθαι κτλ.). The sources do not state how ancient this song actually was, but its textual features point to a composition no earlier than the Hellenistic age (cf. Ch. 2). This kind of ‘traditionality’ is even more evident in the reception of some cultic hymns in the imperial period, which are claimed to be old but are in fact quite recent in origin, such as the one described and quoted by Aelius Aristides.<sup>193</sup> An account of his ‘divine’ dreams (*Or.* 47.30) reports that once at the Asclepeion he heard some boys singing an ‘old song’ in honour of Zeus, which he then quotes in its beginning and three more lines (ἐδόκουν δὲ καὶ τοὺς παῖδας ᾄδειν **τὸ ἀρχαῖον ᾠσμα**, οὗ ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐστὶ, κτλ.). One question that here arises is: What level of antiquity does Aristides exactly mean here? No textual evidence suggests that this hymn was much older than the second century AD. On the contrary, the anapaestic metre, frequent in hymns of the imperial period, would point to rather a recent composition, possibly contemporary with the Greek rhetorician himself.<sup>194</sup> Aristides might, then, have shifted the feature of the poem’s antiquity from the cultic context in which the hymn to Zeus was performed (or imagined to be performed) onto the hymn itself. Singing for Zeus at the sanctuary of Asclepius was surely an ‘ancient’ tradition. Likewise, the cultic hymn sung in this traditional setting could be perceived as traditional and archaic, even though a more recent date of composition might be more reasonable to suppose.

The idea of traditionality as marked in some ill-defined way with primitivism is a generalisation that seems to have invested not only modern categorisations but also ancient perceptions of certain songs. One should not take for granted such conceptions but try to understand the reasons and motivations behind them. In this way, a new interpretative

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<sup>193</sup> On this and further examples, see D’Alessio 2017: 246, 248, 259.

<sup>194</sup> See D’Alessio 2017: 246. Already according to Bergk (1882: 684f.; cf. Id. 1853: 1041; 1866: 1319f.), the lines quoted by Aristides appeared to be a ‘recent’ composition. On this basis, Bergk grounded the exclusion of the fragment from his collection of *carmina popularia* (‘Neque reliquias *Hymni in Iovem* recepi [...]. Hoc quamquam ab Aristide *antiquum* vocatur carmen, satis tamen noviciū videtur’). See also Cerrato 1885: 203f.

framework can be delineated, which will allow us to be able to consider the traditionality of certain songs regardless of their supposed antiquity (cf. §1.3.3).

### 1.2.5 Final remarks

This overview of some of the folk songs' hallmark features confirms what we have said in the first section: the binary oppositions of 'oral/written', 'simple/complex', 'anonymous/authorial' and 'traditional/modern' do not provide an adequate analytical tool for interpreting folksong of any period. This is also valid in the field of ancient Greek culture, where our understanding of the *carmina popularia* is less enhanced and more hampered by the aforementioned binary oppositions. These binary oppositions do not prove effective in revealing what the collection of the *carmina popularia* and the texts included in them really represented in ancient Greece. On the contrary, they merely reflect and perpetuate a number of simplistic and elusive distinctions between folk traditions and literary forms. Notwithstanding its many drawbacks, this idea of folksong as something distinct in its very essence and form from literate poetry still pervades modern scholarship.<sup>195</sup>

More work remains to be done in identifying methodological approaches that may account successfully and usefully for the varieties and complexities of texts such as the *carmina popularia*. To this effect, criteria such as functionality, orality, texture, traditionality, and anonymity are not to be dismissed, but analysed from different theoretical perspectives. The analysis of these criteria should not lead to a prejudicial categorisation of folksong, to be distinguished in form and content, as well as in origin and composition, from literate poetry. Rather, any analysis, such as my own that will follow this Introduction, will be undertaken from the perspective of the contexts of reception and perception of the various songs themselves.

## 1.3 Approaching a new conceptualisation of folksong

In this section, I shall offer a new and revised conceptualisation of folksong, in an attempt to overcome the shortcomings in the common interpretation of folksong as a formal category, as I have highlighted above. My analysis will place special emphasis on the contexts of reception

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<sup>195</sup> Interestingly, similar categorisations ('lowbrow' vs. 'highbrow') and interpretative criteria (e.g. anonymous authorship, textual fluidity or 'openness', and non-canoncity) have also been adopted in the analysis of the ancient novel. Against the intrinsic and external characteristics that seek to define an unsophisticated literature for unsophisticated readers/readings, cf. Avlamiš (2011: 65-76). The ancient novel is the literary genre that has received the most attention in the study of ancient popular culture: cf. e.g. Grig 2017: 27-30. The *Life of Aesop* is one of the most representative texts in this sense: see again Avlamiš 2011, as well as Kurke 2011.

and perception over those of production and composition. After declaring the methodological premises in which my conceptualisation is grounded (§1.3.1), it will lead to a set of working principles (§1.3.2-§1.3.4), rather than to a categorical and all-embracing definition of folksong. Mine will be an approach that can be applied, through the necessary adjustments, across cultures. At any rate, the main concern will be to test, as far as possible, to what extent my conceptualisation of folksong can map successfully onto ancient Greek culture. I shall take into account primarily the types of songs discussed in the present thesis: begging songs (Ch. 2), work songs (Ch. 3), and ritual/cult hymns (Ch. 4). However, further song genres and case studies, drawn from both antiquity and the contemporary world, will be occasionally adopted in my analysis.

### **1.3.1 Methodological premises: folklore as a form of cultural appropriation**

If we want to offer a new conceptualisation of folksong, we first need to change our analytical perspective on folklore as a whole. Our investigation should not focus on who the folk are (and what specific culture or cultures they share), but rather on *how* culture is shared and on *how* cultural items such as songs are used and perceived by the people.<sup>196</sup> Such a methodological premise needs to be validated with reference to two of the most important and ground-breaking approaches recently adopted in folklore and popular culture studies, and respectively elaborated by two leading scholars in the field, Alan Dundes and Roger Chartier. While Dundes clarifies that folk culture should not be associated with a specific social category, labelled as ‘folk’ as opposed to the ‘elite’, Chartier points out that folklore can be understood as a form of cultural appropriation.

Dundes’ theorisation stands in direct contrast to the intellectual background from which the term ‘folk’ emerges (cf. §1.1). As we know, the ‘folk’ were originally identified with backward peasants, the uneducated, and sometimes even with members of less advanced societies or primitive communities. The ‘folk’ thus represented the holders of rural, old-fashioned and exotic forms of culture, which were progressively dying out. While one school of folkloristics remains stuck in these nineteenth-century conceptions,<sup>197</sup> another has succeeded in moving towards a new conception of contemporary folklore, in which far more diverse forms

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<sup>196</sup> Folk culture can be categorised in three main categories: verbal (cf. e.g. folk songs), material and customary. See Sims-Stephens 2011: 12-18.

<sup>197</sup> Cf. e.g. Lelli (2016), who has recently collected and analysed a series of proverbs, sayings, beliefs and superstitions from Southern Italy, in the attempt to show the unchanged folk tradition preserved to this day by agropastoral enclaves of Greek-Roman origin.

of folk knowledge, folk groups, and folk cultures are at stake – including e.g. urban cultures, online forums, sports events, and so on. The main proponent of this newer attitude has been Dundes (1980), who took issue with the generic conception of the ‘folk’ as the lower stratum of society (i.e. the illiterate and rural people), as opposed to the upper stratum (i.e. the literate and urban people). As an alternative, he suggested grounding the analysis of folklore in the following definition of ‘folk group’:

The term ‘folk’ can refer to any group of people whatsoever who share at least one common factor. It does not matter what the linking factor is – it could be a common occupation, language, or religion – but what is important is that a group formed for whatever reason will have some traditions which it calls its own. In theory a group must consist of at least two persons, but generally most groups consist of many individuals. A member of the group may not know all other members, but he will probably know the common core of traditions belonging to the group, traditions which help the group have a sense of group identity.<sup>198</sup>

In Dundes’ view, any group of two or more people who share at least one cultural element is a folk group. ‘Folk group’ thus becomes a very flexible concept, which cannot be reduced to a specific social class with a fixed or minimum educational level, but which, on the contrary, can theoretically encompass an infinitude of folk groups besides ‘peasants’. Folk groups may range from an entire nation (e.g. English folklore) to a single family. They can be distinguished from a geographical point of view (region, state, city or village), or be characterised by one or multiple ethnic, racial, religious or occupational components. Folk groups can therefore express themselves in a variety of contexts, more or less officially,<sup>199</sup> and even within a single group, there may feature a complex social stratification. One individual may also belong to more than one group. At the same time, Dundes’ approach substantially reaffirms the people who are situated at the core of folklore studies, but clarifies that anybody can claim to represent the folk.<sup>200</sup> In this sense, ‘folklore’ does not designate – or, at least, not

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<sup>198</sup> Dundes 1980: 6f.

<sup>199</sup> We can have folklore even in school (cf. e.g. Sims–Stephens 2011: 49-52). Let us also think of the huge tradition of hymns, sport anthems (so-called ‘fight songs’), drinking songs or other genres sung by university/college students.

<sup>200</sup> ‘Who are the folk? Among the others, *we* are’ is the conclusion of Dundes (1980: 19).

exclusively – the vanishing culture of quaint, primitive people. Instead, folklore also points to a living, everyday culture, in which everyone may take part.<sup>201</sup>

Dundes' reformulation of the inclusivity of folk-groups has undoubtedly provided a more coherent interpretative framework in which to place the category of folklore. It has clearly shown that the understanding of folklore does not depend on a univocal interpretation of the question 'Who are the people?'.<sup>202</sup> Yet, his theorisation of folk groups is not enough in and of itself to define the specifics of cultural items shared by those groups. The risk would be to make 'folklore' and 'culture' two indistinguishable categories. What is implicit in Dundes' framework, but which needs further clarification, is that folklore is to be interpreted as a particular form of cultural appropriation. Presumably, most English people – from the academic professor to the small-town farmer – know and sing *Jingle Bells* or *Happy Birthday*, and these songs can be considered part of English folklore.<sup>203</sup> Yet, not all well-known and well-liked songs, even if a part of English culture, can be labelled as 'folk'. The distinctive feature lies in how *Jingle Bells* and *Happy Birthday* are generally used and perceived by the various and multifarious social groups who share them. Folk songs are subject to a specific process of cultural appropriation, and only in this sense do they truly belong to their respective folk groups. To highlight the importance of cultural appropriation in the conceptualisation of folklore, I cannot fail to mention Roger Chartier's approach. Although Chartier investigates materials other than those discussed here (i.e. modern printed texts), his approach will be helpful in delineating more clearly the perspective we need to adopt in our analysis of ancient Greek folksong.

Chartier places the notion of 'appropriation' at the centre of a cultural historical approach.<sup>204</sup> In his view, popular culture (or folklore) – he prefers to use the former term – is a form of cultural appropriation. Accordingly, the 'popular' cannot be found in a ready-made set of texts or habits, but can rather indicate a kind of relation, a way of using cultural products or

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<sup>201</sup> Cf. the working definition put forward by Sims and Stephens (2011: 8): 'Folklore is informally learned, unofficial knowledge about the world, ourselves, our communities, our beliefs, our cultures and our traditions, that is expressed creatively through words, music, customs, actions, behaviors and materials. It is also the interactive, dynamic process of creating, communicating, and performing as we share that knowledge with other people.' On folklore as informal, unofficial knowledge cf. *supra* n. 73.

<sup>202</sup> On what folk groups are, how they form, and how folklore can create, reinforce and express group identity, see now Sims–Stephens 2011: 30-68.

<sup>203</sup> Or more generally, a part of Anglophone Folklore, cf. Dundes 1980: 7.

<sup>204</sup> See Chartier 1984 and 1995: 83-97.

norms. Chartier focuses on the practice of reading, and as a case study he mentions the *Bibliothèque bleue* of France under the *ancien régime*. This repertoire would not directly express the mentality or world-view of ‘popular’ readers, since the *livrets bleus* were texts read by all strata of society, and not only by lower urban classes.<sup>205</sup> By contrast, a correct analysis of these texts would require ‘a social history of the uses and understandings of texts by communities of readers who, successively, take possession of them’ (Chartier 1995: 92). In other words, Chartier suggests that the category of ‘popular’ should be attached to ways of reading, and not to specific texts – hard though it may be to describe the uses of texts and books by popular readers in early Modern Europe.<sup>206</sup>

The specifics of Chartier’s approach have to do with the particular material he tries to analyse. Yet, a similar method, focusing on the reception of texts (folklore as a cultural appropriation) over their contexts of composition and production (‘folk’ as a fixed textual category), may also be applied to the analysis of ancient Greek texts in performance. As neatly expressed by Burke (2009: 14), ‘[t]he moral Chartier draws is that historians should not define sets of texts or other objects as “popular” from the start but study the specific ways in which these objects have been appropriated in particular places and times and by particular groups.’ With specific regard to folksong, the crucial point is to understand not what is sung and by whom, but rather how certain songs are perceived in their contexts of use and reception.<sup>207</sup> Viewed in this light, a song can be perceived in one way in determined situations, whereas in another the same song may be interpreted differently. The right question to ask is, therefore, fundamentally twofold: How, and on what occasions, do folk groups *appropriate* their own songs? From this perspective, I shall now proceed to describe a set of traits and characteristics that helps to define the notion of folksong in relation to its ancient Greek contexts. I shall consider, in the following order, the aspects of functionality, traditionality and anonymity, all

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<sup>205</sup> Chartier (1984: 237f.) identifies peasants, craftsmen and their journeymen, as well as merchants as the ‘popular’ class, of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century France.

<sup>206</sup> Avlami (2011) relies upon Chartier’s approach in order to offer a new definition of popular literature in antiquity. According to Avlami’s formulation (cf. esp. pp. 80f.), ancient popular literature is not a cultural product of the people, in the sense of being ‘made by and/or for the people’, but a literary medium, by means of which the ancient intelligentsia reflected upon the relationship between their cultural world and the popular culture (understood as ‘the totality of the everyday’).

<sup>207</sup> Cf. Avlami (2011: 77) regarding Chartier’s approach: ‘The new question in the study of the Early Modern European history of the book is not *what* was consumed by *whom*, but rather *how* was literature read and what did individuals and groups make of it.’

of which are widely adopted in folklore studies, but which will here be analysed in a new theoretical light.

### **1.3.2 The occasional-functional perspective: modes of reception and contexts of reperformance**

Let us start from a simple question: why do people sing? There need always be a reason, however rational, why people perform songs in determined situations. This reason may correspond to a greater or lesser practical function. The criterion of functionality has often been adopted in the interpretation of folk songs, but typically in order to identify distinct textual categories – so, once again, the focus is not on the ‘how’, but on the ‘what’. Genres such as begging songs and work songs have usually been interpreted as functional songs, that is to say, songs composed and performed on a specific social occasion,<sup>208</sup> in order to carry out a specific social and/or practical function.<sup>209</sup> Yet, we know that the criterion of functionality is not exclusive to folklore studies. For example, all archaic and classical Greek poetry can be discussed in these terms (cf. §1.2.1). Moreover, at the broadest level, any song of any period may hold any function whatsoever, be it only that of gathering people together and entertaining them, such as in the case of any star performer’s concert. One can make better use of the criterion of functionality by regarding it not so much as a way of cataloguing certain types of songs from first principles, but rather as a specific mode of reception and perception. Begging and work songs can be considered ‘folk’ not because they represent fixed textual categories (i.e. functional songs), but because they are primarily perceived, in their common contexts of use, from a functionalist standpoint. The functionalist perspective tells us not so much why, but *how*, folk songs are used and perceived. Besides, this aspect is helpful to pinpoint particular contexts of performance – the ‘where’ – in the case of folk, as opposed to other types of, songs.

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<sup>208</sup> While the performative occasions of work songs are easily identifiable as any kind of working contexts, those of begging songs are much more varied (cf. Chapters 3 and 2, respectively).

<sup>209</sup> As for begging songs, the function is clearly that of explicitly claiming a reward for the performance. By contrast, the practical functionality of work songs can be less transparent: they can either serve as rhythmical aids to the workers or simply in order to alleviate the working activities. See e.g. Beaton (1980: 136-147), who, in relation to the Modern Greek tradition, labels begging songs and work songs as jointly ‘functional songs’, in order to more clearly distinguish them from the ‘demotic tradition’ (e.g. songs of the fall of cities and ‘kleftic’ songs, the latter being sung by Greek rebels who have historically resisted Turkish occupation). Even in the latter case, however, the songs appear to have one or more specific functions on certain social occasions (Beaton 1980: 90-111).



To clarify in what sense the functionality criterion can be analysed as a mode of reception and perception, it is helpful to refer to the distinction recently illustrated by Felix Budelmann (2013). Budelmann identifies two types of perspectives from which songs are generally perceived in their contexts of use: an occasional-functional perspective, and a stand-alone perspective.<sup>210</sup> He points out that while, in the case of a stand-alone perspective, the song-texts are often looked at as ‘products of high art’, with a strong focus on aesthetics, conversely on the functionalist viewpoint, the same or different songs are mainly considered ‘for what they do for their performers and their society’ (2013: 81). Budelmann claims that the two perspectives are not mutually exclusive, and that one perspective should not be overlooked in favour of the other in the analysis of song-texts.<sup>211</sup> While keeping the two perspectives distinct, one would be encouraged to study the relationship between them. In this relationship and in the balance between the occasional-functional and the stand-alone perspectives, we find an important clue about how folk group appropriate and use their own songs, and by extension about what folksong really is. Now, I argue that the label of ‘folk’ can be attached to those songs that are used and perceived mainly from an occasional-functional, over and against a stand-alone, perspective. Let us next explore in what cases and situations the occasional-functional perspective tends to be prevalent, and what this mode of perception entails for the conceptualisation of folksong.

The balance between the stand-alone and occasional-functional perspectives greatly varies depending on the type of performance given. In turn, the type of social event in which the performance is actualised may determine the type of performance itself. Here I do not mean to refer to a categorical distinction between ‘unofficial’ and ‘official’ contexts, a distinction that is often difficult to pin down in definite terms.<sup>212</sup> Instead, I want to distinguish between contexts

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<sup>210</sup> Budelmann speaks about ‘choruses’, but in the broader sense of ‘choral songs’, i.e. songs sung by a group of people. He specifically applies his discourse to the ancient Greek ‘choruses’, by taking as case studies Alcman’s *Partheneion* 1 and Pindar’s *Paean* 9 (cf. *infra*). At any rate, his entire discourse is applicable to every kind of song, and of every age.

<sup>211</sup> Budelmann complains that fields such as anthropology and ethnography, as well as Classics (above all with regard to archaic and classical Greece), have often given priority to the occasional-functional perspective in their analysis of texts, overlooking the stand-alone perspective, according to which the same texts were performed and listened to in their own right. On the contrary, modern Choruses in opera, in choral music and in theatre are generally analysed just for their ‘art’/‘aesthetics’.

<sup>212</sup> Cf. e.g. Burke 2009: 7f. See also Neri (2003: 198f.) regarding the *carmina popularia*: he acknowledges that most of these texts were perfectly integrated into the official festivals, rites, and activities of the various *poleis*. On Neri’s interpretation, see also Magnani 2013a: 565.

where the songs' performance lies in the foreground as the central event, and contexts where the songs' performance serves subsidiary, and more functional, purposes. A first, crucial distinction can be made between one-off performances and repeated performances, or what I shall henceforth call 'reperformances'.<sup>213</sup> If we attend the premiere performance by an artist, a concert or a music competition during the context of a festival, the performed song is likely to be perceived as an art form in its own right (i.e. to be analysed from a 'stand-alone perspective'). The song in question will mainly be considered for its artistic value and judged in relation to the whole performance. Audiences may appreciate (or not appreciate) not only the quality of the song or music, but also other aspects such as the outfits of the performer, their physical presence, their talent, virtuosity, and professionalism.<sup>214</sup> Broadly speaking, in the case of one-off performances at festivals, concerts or music competitions, audiences tend to enjoy and reflect on the songs *qua* songs, at the expense of the functionalist perspective, which can also be present but not in a predominant way.<sup>215</sup>

At the other end of the spectrum, there occur reperformances. Any text can be reperformed, but not all reperformances are the same.<sup>216</sup> When folk groups appropriate certain songs, these are repeatedly performed in determined situations and over more or less extended

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<sup>213</sup> Cf. Budelmann (2013: 95f.) 'The distinction [scil. between the stand-alone and the occasional-functional perspectives] must at least in part be to do with the degree to which audiences look at the song as a song. At the extreme ends one can imagine the scenario of the long-awaited premiere of the latest composition by a Panhellenic composer that has created considerable excitement in advance, and the performance of an anonymous and short yet resonant cult song as part of a prescribed ritual routine.' Here Budelmann is referring to the specific typology of ancient cult song, for which it is often difficult to establish which one of the two perspectives was prevalent (cf. *infra*). Budelmann also mentions other important aspects for the conceptualisation of folksong – anonymity, texture (small-scale textual piece), and reperformance on a frequent basis – aspects that, however, need further clarification and contextualisation. On anonymity, cf. §1.3.4; on recurring (as 'synchronic') reperformance and the relationship between modes of perception and texture, cf. the discussion to follow.

<sup>214</sup> For these aspects of reception and perception in the Hellenistic audience of musical agonistic events – also in comparison with what modern audiences experience during, e.g., the Eurovision Song Contest – see Chaniotis 2009.

<sup>215</sup> Similarly, on ancient Greek music competitions, cf. also Budelmann (2013: 95): 'There is [...] variation between performances within and outside competitions. Competition does not void ritual embedding, but it does insistently prompt considerations of skill and comparison with other songs: it makes a difference to the balance.' On the inaccuracy in sharply separating agonistic events from ritual and cultic procedures in ancient Greece, see e.g. Wilson 2007a: 169-171; Pörtulas 2012: 235f., 238f.

<sup>216</sup> Within Classics (and more), increased emphasis has been recently laid on the study of reperformance. See e.g. the most recent volume edited by R. Hunter and A. Uhlig (2017).

periods. Therefore, folk songs are always actualised in oral *reperformance*. However, even this statement sounds too generic. More to the point, we need to reflect upon the specific typology of *reperformance* that is individually at stake. In this regard, Giambattista D'Alessio (2017) has drawn a two-sided distinction, which, if properly adapted and integrated with Budelmann's approach, can prove useful for the present argument as well.<sup>217</sup> According to D'Alessio (2017: 160), 'one should distinguish between a sort of long-term ("diachronic") *reperformance*, involving occasional repetitions (and modifications) of famous classics from the past, for example, at festivals or "concerts", and a sort of "synchronic" repetition that in certain contexts would have entailed performing (and listening to) the same, traditional choral songs on a frequent, even daily basis.'<sup>218</sup> I would add that audiences tend to respond to diachronic *reperformances* from a stand-alone perspective (similarly to the way they receive premiere performances), and that, on the contrary, the occasional-functional viewpoint is more likely to prevail in synchronic *reperformances*. The two situations can also overlap, and there are cases of synchronic repetitions in which the self-standing perspective is as relevant as the functional one (cf. *infra*). At any rate, this general distinction is useful in clarifying the fact that folk songs are always actualised in those synchronic *reperformances* in which the functionalist perspective is dominant. In any recurring social occasion where the songs' performance is not in the foreground as the central event, but to some extent accompanies those occasions with a subsidiary and functional purpose, we have many chances of finding a folk song. Let us clarify this position with some examples.

The situation should be as clear for folk songs as for begging and work songs. Their usual performances, the main aspect of which concerns their specific functionality (cf. *supra* n. 209), entail 'synchronic' repetitions of the same (or slightly modified) songs on a frequent basis. The frequency of the *reperformances* can vary, in the sense that the 'synchronic' repetitions of the various songs can be placed in a more or less extended time frame. For instance, in the case of the Rhodian begging song (*PMG* 848, Ch. 2), the performance took place once a year upon the arrival of spring. More frequent are the repetitions of most work songs, which were generally performed on a daily basis during a specific occupational activity (cf. Ch. 3).

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<sup>217</sup> In his article, D'Alessio's focus is mainly on 'songs composed for public festivals and/or cultic rituals' (p. 234) between the Hellenistic and the imperial periods.

<sup>218</sup> Though from different perspectives, D'Alessio reaches similar conclusions to Budelmann's (cf. *supra* n. 215). D'Alessio also mentions the aspect of 'traditionality' in synchronic *reperformances*. On this aspect, see §1.3.3.

Sometimes, however, the ‘synchronicity’ of the reperformances cannot be identified in a specific event, that is clearly fixed in a determined place and time. In this case, the recurrent event may be represented by an abstract idea of performative context that eventually materialises into varied events, across different locations and times. We can think of the example of protest songs. They are usually sung whenever there is something to protest against, e.g. during any political demonstration. Yet, each of these occasions will be different from one another, occurring in different locations and times. The recurring synchronic event of protest songs therefore consists in the act of protesting itself.<sup>219</sup> Likewise, the synchronic repetition of certain begging and work songs can occur, respectively, whenever there is a *quête* or whenever a work activity is accompanied by the singing.

Unlike begging and work songs, religious hymnology is less easily attributable *in toto* to the realm of folksong (cf. Ch. 4). Liturgical songs (both ancient and modern) can be considered ‘folk’ when they are primarily performed as a function of the religious ceremony they accompany (i.e. in a synchronic reperformance). However, religious songs can also be interpreted beyond a functionalist point of view. Besides, a single cultic text can be perceived differently according to its different performative contexts. No generalisation ought to be made, but we need to analyse on a case by case basis *how* a song is perceived in its specific contexts of use. With a particular focus on ancient Greek texts,<sup>220</sup> let me illustrate in further detail some exemplary cases of ritual/cult songs that are perceived from a function-independent or function-dependent viewpoint, in the contexts of both diachronic and synchronic reperformance.

Firstly, I shall turn to the case studies offered by Budelmann (2013: 83-93) and embed them within the current discussion. Budelmann shows how even some ritual and cultic texts, such as Alcman’s *Partheneion* 1 and Pindar’s *Paeon* 9, could be perceived beyond a mere occasional functional-perspective, in both their diachronic and synchronic reperformances (to apply the terminology of D’Alessio). Unfortunately, little or nothing is known about their respective contexts of reperformance. Therefore, Budelmann (2013: 89) resorts to textual analysis to highlight ‘the complexity of the texts in their own right, a complexity that helped to

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<sup>219</sup> An example of protest song performed all over the world in different, yet similar and related contexts, is *We shall not be moved* (see Spener 2016).

<sup>220</sup> In the case of ancient Greek cult songs, the difficulty in establishing which mode of reception is prevalent is even more evident. Indeed, we cannot deny the pervasive role of religion and ritual practice in any kind of musical performance of ancient Greece. On the relationship between rituality and song performance in ancient Greek culture, cf. (with further bibliography) Bierl 2009: 11-18; Kowalzig 2007: 1-55; Budelmann 2013: 81-83.

make even the most overtly occasional passages absorbing and stimulating objects of poetic interpretation and appreciation, kinds of interpretation and appreciation that an occasional-functional perspective by itself cannot adequately capture'. Here Budelmann is not drawing definitive criteria of sophistication between high-quality poetry – which is originally intended for being perceived in its own right – and low-quality poetry (as functional poetry).<sup>221</sup> Rather, he is reasonably admitting that the textual complexity can sometimes induce – and thus reveal, as in the case of Alcman's *Partheneion* 1 and Pindar's *Paeon* 9 – a more marked stand-alone perspective in the perception of the songs.<sup>222</sup>

Budelmann (2013: 83-87) firstly analyses the case of Alcman's *Partheneion* 1 and Pindar's *Paeon* 9 as reperformed in an altogether different context from their original ones. Performative contexts of this type may be located in fifth-century BC Athens, where the widespread knowledge of Alcmanic and Pindaric compositions – as is highlighted mostly in dramatic texts – would attest to their reperformances *in loco*.<sup>223</sup> Budelmann (2013: 88) argues that Athenian audiences were able to 'respond to the songs as things in their own right, as self-standing, abstracted from their occasion'. They would even have been able to exploit the prompts offered by the texts themselves in order to re-enact the songs' original occasion. In this case, however, they were imagining an occasion that did not correspond to the ongoing occasion. Therefore, in Athens, Alcman's *Partheneion* 1 or Pindar's *Paeon* 9 could indeed be performed as a partheneion or a paeon in a proper ritual and cultic context. All the same, Athenian audiences were likely to perceive those songs not as much as their own partheneion or their own paeon, but rather as classics by Alcman or Pindar that were being 'diachronically' reperformed.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> Conversely, a lesser textual complexity does not necessarily result in lower quality (cf. *infra*).

<sup>222</sup> We need to bear in mind that, however helpful it may be in some circumstances, textual complexity is not, in absolute terms, a determining factor in the balance between the occasional-functional and the stand-alone perspectives. Nowadays, if we attend any kind of musical concert – from pop music to opera – we are likely to enjoy that performance from a self-standing viewpoint, regardless of the sophistication of the text performed.

<sup>223</sup> See Budelmann 2013: 83f. Pindar's poems are also among the most studied in terms of reperformance: see some of the articles in Agócs–Carey–Rawles 2012 (esp. Budelmann's and Morrison's ones); Budelmann 2017; Currie 2017.

<sup>224</sup> Cf. Budelmann (2013: 87): 'Athenians listening to [...] Alcman's partheneia or Pindar's *Paeon* 9 were conscious they were imagining an occasion that was far removed from their own here and now: *Paeon* 9 may have been a paeon but it was not *their* paeon, and the *Louvre Partheneion* was not *their* partheneion.'

Budermann (2013: 88-93) adds that Alcman's *Partheneion* 1 and Pindar's *Paean* 9 could be perceived from an occasion- and function-independent viewpoint even in their original performances. At least in the case of the *Louvre Partheneion*, we can be sure that this song was regularly performed as part of a recurring festival (synchronic reperformance) and with a specific ritual function.<sup>225</sup> Despite this indisputable bond to its ritual context, the *Louvre Partheneion*, through its textual complexity, was also able to prompt the audience, even in the most overtly occasional passages, to 'produce readings, to fill gaps, to make connections' (Budermann 2013: 89), in other words to reflect upon the song *qua* song. Alcman's *Partheneion* 1 might thus have represented the musical climax of a recurring event, perceived from a self-standing perspective as a celebrated classic.

By accepting that the self-standing viewpoint was at least as important as the functionalist one in the performative reception of Alcman's *Partheneion* 1 and Pindar's *Paean* 9, these texts cannot be considered 'folk'. However, in the synchronic reperformances where the occasional-functional perspective prevails, the picture radically changes. An illuminating example is the hymn to Health ascribed to Ariphron of Sicyon (*PMG* 813):

Ὑγίεια βροτοῖσι πρεσβίστα μακάρων, μετὰ σεῦ  
ναίοιμι τὸ λειπόμενον βιοτᾶς, σὺ δέ μοι πρόφρων ξυνείης.  
εἰ γάρ τις ἢ πλούτου χάρις ἢ τεκέων  
ἢ τᾶς ἰσοδαίμονος ἀνθρώποις βασιληίδος ἀρχᾶς ἢ πόθων,  
οὓς κρυφίοις Ἀφροδίτας ἔρκεσιν θηρεύομεν, 5  
ἢ εἴ τις ἄλλα θεόθεν ἀνθρώποισι τέρψις ἢ πόνων  
ἀμπνοὰ πέφανται,  
μετὰ σεῖο, μάκαιρ' Ὑγίεια,  
τέθαλε καὶ λάμπει Χαρίτων ὁάροις·  
σέθεν δὲ χωρὶς οὔτις εὐδαίμων ἔφν. 10

Health, most cherished of gods for men, with you  
I pray to live the remainder of my life, and you be kind to me!  
If there is any joy in wealth or children  
or in kingly power which elevates men to gods, or in desires  
which we pursue with all the subterfuge of Aphrodite, 5

<sup>225</sup> The bibliography on the occasional-functional interpretation of Alcman's *Partheneion* 1 is vast. Cf. the references in Budermann 2013: 83 n. 3, 92 n. 28.

or if the gods grant humans any other pleasures  
or relief from miseries,  
in your presence, blessed Health,  
they thrive and shine, endowed with charm.  
But without you no one's life is happy.<sup>226</sup>

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Alongside a manuscript tradition (both indirect and direct),<sup>227</sup> Ariphron's hymn is preserved on two stones, one from Athens (*IG* II<sup>2</sup> 4533), the other from Epidauros (*IG* IV<sup>2</sup> 1.132), in both cases as part of a larger collection of songs.<sup>228</sup> The inscriptions are second/third-century AD, but they feature texts that may belong to a much earlier period.<sup>229</sup> These collections, however, would not serve – at least not exclusively – as merely antiquarian memorialisation, but they also seem to be connected to the frequent performances, contemporary to the date of the inscriptions, of the texts they preserve.<sup>230</sup> For instance, in one of the Epidaurian hymns, the one to Pallas, a para-text is preserved that indicates the exact hour

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<sup>226</sup> Transl. by Furley–Bremer 2001: 1.224. On Ariphron's hymn, see also Wagman 1995: 149-178; Furley–Bremer 2001: 1.224-227, 2.175-180; LeVen 2014: 277-282; D'Alessio 2017: 248-251.

<sup>227</sup> The text in question is quoted in full by Athenaeus (15.702ab) and is preserved in the medieval manuscript *Ottobonianus* gr. 59. Other authors (Plutarch, Sextus Empiricus, Maximus of Tyre and Lucian) also cite some verses. Athenaeus is the only source that mentions the name of an author, a certain Ariphron. Nothing is known historically about the poet himself (cf. Furley–Bremer 2001: 1.224 with n. 46; D'Alessio 2017: 248 with n. 54).

<sup>228</sup> In the Kassel/Athens inscription, Ariphron's hymn is preceded by a prayer to Asclepius and is followed by two short hymns, both of which are dedicated to the minor healing deity Telesphoros (see respectively 7.6, 7.7.1 and 7.7.2 in Furley–Bremer 2001). In the Epidaurian inscription, Ariphron's hymn occupies the first position, and is followed by two unidentified texts – maybe a hymn to Asclepius and another to Asclepius or Apollo (*IG* IV<sup>2</sup> 1.133) – as well as a hymn to Pallas Athena (*IG* IV<sup>2</sup> 1.134). This inscription is in turn part of a larger wall monument, on which other fragments and at least another collection of songs (*IG* IV<sup>2</sup> 1.129-131) are inscribed (cf. Wagman 1995 and 2012).

<sup>229</sup> According to Furley and Bremer (2001: 1.226f.), Ariphron's hymn might have been composed in the late fourth or third century BC. Cf. also Wagman (1995: 168-171), who argues that the hymn, from a metrical point of view, bears close affinities with some fourth-century BC compositions (see *infra* n. 239). All the same, doubts remain, cf. e.g. D'Alessio 2017: 248 ('we have really no solid evidence regarding the date of the hymn').

<sup>230</sup> See D'Alessio 2017: 250f. With specific regard to the Epidaurian collection, cf. also Wagman 1995: 38-40 and 2012: 223 ('the Epidaurian inscription is not the memorial of an outstanding performance [...], or a poetic dedication [...], but the product of an organization – or rather, re-organization – of musical materials gathered through the years from a variety of chronological periods and cultural contexts').

in which the hymn was to be reperformed.<sup>231</sup> Likewise, we can suppose that Ariphron's hymn to Health, as arranged on the inscription before the hymn to Pallas, would have been performed earlier in the day.<sup>232</sup> A similar practice and morning schedule might also be supposed for the songs inscribed on the Kassel/Athens stone. Here relevant para-texts are missing, but the fact that Ariphron's hymn is preceded by an early-morning prayer to Asclepius – urging the god to wake up and attend the ongoing ritual – may lead one to think that, also in this case, Ariphron's hymn was sung at a fixed time in the course of a day's worship.<sup>233</sup> The hymn to Health seems to have been performed, both at Athens and Epidauros, within a daily ritual devoted to the healing worship of Asclepius.<sup>234</sup> Such an occasion corresponds to a synchronic reperformance, where the song in question is sung and perceived mainly during the function of the liturgy it accompanied.<sup>235</sup> From this perspective, Ariphron's hymn to Health can be considered a folk song, shared by the religious communities at Epidauros in the imperial period.<sup>236</sup>

Even from a textual point of view, there are significant differences between Ariphron's hymn and the Alcmanic and Pindaric compositions analysed above. These textual differences do not result in categorical distinctions between lowbrow poetry (folksong) and highbrow poetry (literary poetry), but rather confirm that the texture of songs can sometimes influence (and thus reveal) a certain type of reception and perception. The hymn to Health clearly features

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<sup>231</sup> The heading ὥραι τρίτηι ('at the third hour') would indicate that this hymn to Pallas was sung at about 9 o'clock in the morning (see Wagman 1995: 26, 221).

<sup>232</sup> The heading ὥραι πρώτῃ – 'at the first hour', i.e. at around 7 o'clock in the morning – has been conjectured (see Wagman 1995: 25).

<sup>233</sup> Cf. Wagman 1995: 172 n. 26; Furley–Bremer 2001: 1.268.

<sup>234</sup> On the daily Epidaurian liturgy, cf. Wagman 1995: 35 n. 18 and 2012: 223 n. 13.

<sup>235</sup> Interestingly, Wagman contrasts the two collections of songs preserved in the Epidaurian inscription (cf. *supra* n. 230) on the basis of their performative use. See Wagman 2012: 222f. (cf. also Id. 1995: 35-38): 'Thematically as well as epigraphically the texts appear to be organized in two main categories, songs composed for special occasions, such as festivals, contests and privately sponsored events [*scil. IG IV<sup>2</sup> 1.129-131*], and songs performed at fixed times during the daily ritual [*scil. IG IV<sup>2</sup> 1.132-134*] [...]. In the texts of first category the title is placed at the beginning of composition, centered above the first line. In the texts of the second category, this position is occupied by the indication of the hour, while the title is placed at the end of composition as a marginal notation in small size lettering. In this category the end of a section of text is also indicated by an ivy mark. In two of the texts a numeric symbol is included, to specify how many times a final invocation needs to be repeated.'

<sup>236</sup> Similar perspectives may be applied to other inscriptional texts with a clear liturgical function, such as e.g. the Erythraean paean (*PMG* 934). On this song, see 6.1 in Furley–Bremer 2001; LeVen 2014: 286-294; D'Alessio 2017: 248 n. 56, 250.



lesser textual complexity,<sup>237</sup> and it is also characterized by a ‘universal applicability’, not offering any textual prompt that firmly links the text to a specific performative context.<sup>238</sup> These aspects are not to be inevitably ascribed to preconceived (lowbrow) contexts of origin and production, and therefore they do not necessarily result in lower quality. Indeed, the formal level of Ariphron’s hymn shows a close affinity with a wide range of other, and sometimes more prominent, authorial Greek texts.<sup>239</sup> Moreover, we do not know for what original occasion the author composed this hymn.<sup>240</sup> We are not even able to know if this composition was actually intended from the start for future re-enactments.<sup>241</sup> Just as the textual complexity of Alcman’s *Partheneion* 1 and Pindar’s *Paean* 9 would point to a more marked self-standing perspective in their use and reception, so the more practical adaptability of the hymn to Health – whether intentional or not – would have encouraged its use (or re-use) in daily liturgy from a functionalist perspective.

One last point worth noticing is that daily liturgy may not represent the sole performative occasion of Ariphron’s hymn. We know that, by the second century AD, the hymn was known well beyond the boundaries of the Epidaurian sanctuary.<sup>242</sup> We cannot exclude, therefore, that the hymn was performed in other ritual occasions or festivals, or even in symposia.<sup>243</sup> It is not far-fetched to assume that the stand-alone viewpoint, in the perception of

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<sup>237</sup> Were it only for the fact Ariphron’s hymn is a small-scale piece, as opposed to those of Alcman and Pindar analysed above.

<sup>238</sup> On the ‘universal applicability’ of some cult songs, cf. Budelmann 2013: 86; D’Alessio 2017: 247 with n. 52, 259.

<sup>239</sup> Cf. the language (lyric *koine*), the metre (dactylo-epitrite) and the various *voces poeticæ* (e.g. Βασιληῖδος in l.4 and Χαρίτων ὅαροις in l. 9). For the textual analysis of the song, cf. esp. Wagman 1995: 173-178; Furley–Bremer 2001: 2.175-180; LeVen 2014: 279-281. Wagman (1995: 169-171) also argues that, from a metrical point of view, Ariphron’s hymn bears great resemblance to Aristotle’s ode to Virtue (*PMG* 842), the *Skolia Septem Sapientium* (*SH* 521-26), and an Attic skolion (*PMG* 890), sometimes attributed by Simonides (cf. Fabbro 1995: 116f.).

<sup>240</sup> For example, it has been supposed that the original *Sitz im Leben* of Ariphron’s hymn was the symposium, where the hymn would have served as a post-prandial prayer (cf. Lambin 1992: 318f. and Wagman 1995: 171f.). As such, the song is also presented by Athenaeus.

<sup>241</sup> An issue regarding most ancient Greek choral poetry: cf. e.g. Hinge 2006: 290-294 (with specific regard to Alcman’s poems).

<sup>242</sup> For instance, Lucian (*de lapsu* 6) refers to this song as ‘on everyone’s lips’: ἵνα σοι μὴ τὸ γνωριμώτατον ἐκεῖνο καὶ πᾶσι διὰ στόματος λέγω (*PMG* 813.1-2): ὑγίεια, πρεσβίστα μακάρων, μετὰ σεῦ ναίοιμι τὸ λειπόμενον βιοτᾶς.

<sup>243</sup> On Ariphron’s hymn as a sympotic song, see *supra* n. 240.

the same song on some of these occasions, could be as relevant as, if not more prominent than, the occasional-functional perspective. This means that in performative contexts other than the daily liturgy – e.g. in the case of no longer synchronic but presumably diachronic reperformances – Ariphron’s hymn could be perceived as a song in its own right, and not as a folk song in the sense delineated above. A comparison can be made with modern cultic hymnology. The perception of the *Ave Maria* by Schubert<sup>244</sup> performed in a concert hall by the renowned Choir of Westminster Abbey, or by famous artists such as Luciano Pavarotti or Andrea Bocelli, tends to be very different from the use and perception of the same song sung by a local, semi-professional choir during a liturgical ceremony. Only, in the second case, the mode of reception and perception is more oriented towards an occasional-functional viewpoint, and from this perspective, even Schubert’s *Ave Maria* can be considered a folk song belonging to the various religious communities (folk groups) that listen to and/or join in the singing during the Mass.<sup>245</sup>

So far, I have delineated a specific mode of reception and perception (the occasional-functional perspective) in which to ground the conceptualisation of folksong. Besides, I have pinpointed particular types of performances and performative occasions where this mode is prevalent (synchronic reperformances). This conceptualisation of folksong does not distinguish a specific and fixed (textual) category, but takes into account that a song can be perceived in different ways according to its different contexts of use and consumption. Even when we can make distinctions regarding the texture of the song in question – on the one hand, its textual complexity, while on the other hand, its shortness and universal applicability – these distinctions do not refer to determined contexts of origin and composition, but are more significantly related to one type of perception prevailing over another. The notion of folksong can therefore embrace various genres, that are very different from one another, such as begging songs, work songs and liturgical songs. What characterises these songs as legitimately ‘folk’ is not the social ID of who is using them. Nor are the kinds of contexts of origin and composition relevant from which they stem. What counts is how these songs are used, perceived and appropriated by the people sharing them.

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<sup>244</sup> I am here referring both to the song by Walter Scott (in the epic poem *The Lady of the Lake* 3.19), which was set to music by Franz Schubert in the German translation by Adam Storck, and to the traditional Roman Catholic prayer *Ave Maria*, for which Schubert’s melody was adapted as a setting.

<sup>245</sup> In §1.3.4, I shall also show in what sense liturgical hymns can be used and perceived as anonymous songs, regardless of their original authorship.

This approach also entails other characterisations and analytical elements that can further enrich our understanding of folksong, i.e. traditionality and anonymity. Let us now explore to what extent songs such as Ariphron's hymn – when used and perceived mainly from an occasional-functional perspective (and in synchronic reperformances) – can be considered traditional and anonymous.

### 1.3.3 Traditionality in synchronic reperformances

In the conceptualisation of folklore and folksong, the category of 'tradition' has played a significant role. The 'traditional' aspect of folklore and folksong – since its intellectual roots in the nineteenth century, from which the two concepts emerged, up until recent times – has generally pointed to an undefined cultural primitivism, which proves however to be in most cases groundless and misleading (cf. §1.1.2.iv). Interestingly, we also find in antiquity a similar generalisation, especially in the perception of songs that are regularly performed in a religious context and that are described (often misleadingly) as vaguely 'ancient' (cf. §1.2.4). Likewise, even Ariphron's hymn, though not attested before Plutarch, is referred to by Maximus of Tyre (*Or.* 7.1) as an 'ancient song' (ἀρχαῖον ᾠσμα).

In order to better understand the reasons for similar (ancient and modern) generalisations and misperceptions, we should go beyond the strict and unilateral relation between tradition and the past, by primarily reflecting on what has been said above about the 'synchronicity' element in the performance of folk songs. Those songs that are constantly reperformed in a recurring event (synchronic reperformances) can be considered 'traditional' not in the sense of being 'old-fashioned' or 'primitive', but as being part of a habitual – in some cases even daily – routine. This kind of traditionality does not look at how ancient a song actually is, but takes into account the fact that songs, old and new, can become part of a traditional event, and within it assume a cultural value.

This interpretative view is consistent with the most innovative approaches adopted in the analysis of the category of 'tradition'. 'Tradition' still indicates the transmission of knowledge, but this transmission, as is now recognised, may not only establish a line of communication from the past to the present (cf. the nineteenth-century interpretation), but also extend a line of cultural communication from the present to the past.<sup>246</sup> On this view, even what is new can assume a symbolic value that marks it as traditional. A society can acknowledge the

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<sup>246</sup> For an overview on this approach, with particular regard to the Homeric 'tradition', see Cantilena 2012.

cultural value of certain phenomena and accordingly attribute to them a characteristic of antiquity that they often do not possess. In some cases, this cultural acknowledgement is less spontaneous but can be traced back to a constructed and formally instituted process that, at least after Hobsbawm, has become known as an ‘invented tradition’.<sup>247</sup> From this general point of view, what really counts is not the more or less demonstrable antiquity of a fact, a story, a belief, or a ritual, but the process of traditionalisation that may or may not invest it. Overall, ‘tradition’ can be defined as the continuous process through which an innovation turns into a routine as it acquires social and cultural value.<sup>248</sup>

Traditionality, so understood, does not exclusively concern folklore.<sup>249</sup> All the same, what is important to stress here is that folk songs can be considered traditional songs, but without this traditionality pointing to, by default, an undefined and remote past. Folk songs, both old and new, are traditional because they are performed on a traditional (i.e. recurring) occasion: they are thus an integral part of that tradition. What begging songs, work songs and liturgical songs such as Aripbron’s hymn share as traditional songs is thus not their supposed primitiveness or undefined antiquity, but the symbolic and cultural value of their routine performances.

#### **1.3.4 Anonymity *qua* absence of the ‘author-function’: folk songs as unauthorised songs**

Folk songs are loosely said to be anonymous by their nature, in opposition to authorial textual traditions. From a different light, anonymity is sometimes understood more specifically as collective authorship, mainly expressed through variants, and in contrast with forms of individual composition.<sup>250</sup> Here I want to propose a new interpretative model for the anonymity criterion. I suggest focusing not on contexts of origin and composition – a text is anonymous because it is transmitted without an author’s name, or because it is composed communally – but on the specific modalities in which certain songs are perceived in their own contexts of use and consumption. On this point of view, ‘anonymity’ is not to be seen as a given category attached to texts, but will rather represent a significant implication of the functionalist mode of

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<sup>247</sup> See Hobsbawm–Ranger 1983. On possible ‘invented traditions’ in ancient Greek culture, see e.g. the historical accounts provided by the sources as regards *PMG* 848 (Ch. 2) and 868 (Ch. 4).

<sup>248</sup> See esp. Cantilena 2012: 159f.

<sup>249</sup> From this perspective, even Alcman’s *Partheneion* 1 (cf. §1.3.2) and the Homeric poems (cf. esp. Cantilena 2012: 158f.) can be considered ‘traditional’.

<sup>250</sup> On these two views, see §1.1.2.iii and §1.2.3.

perception and reception that I have delineated above (§1.3.2). Firstly, by resorting to, and properly adapting, the Foucauldian notion of ‘author-function’, I shall explain how the anonymity of folk songs depends on the degree to which the category of ‘author’ *functions* within a given context. In performative contexts where the occasional-functional perspective prevails, the authorising and authenticating functionality of the author’s name – whereby ‘author’ is broadly understood as both the composer and the performer of a song – is not operating. In these cases, knowing who is speaking (the ‘authorial’ voice) is not essential for the purposes of the performance itself. Folk songs are thus anonymous in that they are ‘unauthorised’ songs, and in this specific sense, folk songs truly belong to the various folk groups who share them. After offering a series of specific examples, especially in relation to ancient Greek culture, I shall conclude that such an approach does not exclude elements of communal participation in folksong. Rather, it clarifies that elements such as the variants are a potential consequence of the way folk songs are usually used and perceived.

In order to better understand the criterion of anonymity, let us start from the opposite end. What does the criterion of a song or text’s authorship represent? From an etymological point of view, authorship represents a form of *auctoritas* (‘authority’).<sup>251</sup> Who speaks (or writes) – the *auctor* (‘author’) –<sup>252</sup> speaks (or writes) because they hold an authority, which, in turn, serves to authorise, or authenticate, what has been said (or written).<sup>253</sup> More importantly, this authority may emanate from the author’s own identity. In other words, an utterance (verbal or written) is authorised if it is provided with an author’s name. The validating function of authorship represents one of the most significant implications of the Foucauldian notion of ‘author-function’ (Foucault 1991).<sup>254</sup>

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<sup>251</sup> Cf. e.g. Maslov (2015: 51): ‘Western theoretical reflection on authorship from very early on attests to the symptomatic conflation: to be an author (an *auctor*) is to have authority. Medieval Latin dictionaries derived the word *auctor* from a putative Greek noun *autentim* meaning “authority”. The fact that no such Greek word exists makes the cultural effort of locating authority in individual authorship all the more apparent.’

<sup>252</sup> In the following discussion, I adopt the term ‘author’ in the broad sense of ‘who is speaking’, in a verbal or written communication: an *auctor* (cf. the Latin *agere* ‘to act’ or ‘perform’) as the one who performs not only the act of writing/composing but also that of singing/performing.

<sup>253</sup> Likewise, Parker (2011: 165) adopts ‘the term “authorize” in all its etymological force, that which turns someone into an *auctor* (author, creator) with *auctoritas* (author-ity)’. Parker uses this terminology more broadly, to define ‘popular culture’ as ‘unauthorised culture’ (cf. *supra* n. 73). He is more interested in institutions and authorities *per se*, while I here explore the specific authority emanating from the ‘author’.

<sup>254</sup> I here adopt the English translation of Michael Foucault’s original article (‘Qu’est-ce qu’ un auteur?’), published in 1969 in *Bulletin de la Société française de philosophie* 63/3: 73-104. This article succeeded Roland

In Foucault's formulation, an author's name is not simply a part of speech, but can hold multiple interpretative functions within a given discourse. The cause and condition of the author as function is the complex process of textual attribution, which is, however, independent from the historical reality of the individual production. The aim is not to depict the biographical figure of the author behind a text, but to analyse the function of the author's name – whether real or fictional – in a given discourse. What is important to notice for my discussion on anonymity is that the 'author-function' is not always operating (Foucault 1991: 453):

The 'author-function' is not universal or constant in all discourse. Even within our civilization, the same types of texts have not always required authors; there was a time when those texts which we now call 'literary' (stories, folk tales, epics, and tragedies) were accepted, circulated, and valorized without any question about the identity of their author. Their anonymity was ignored because their real or supposed age was a sufficient guarantee of their authenticity.

In this passage, Foucault observes a diachronic inconstancy between texts in which the author's name is now functional and the same texts in which the 'author-function' was not operating. He wants to stress that, in modern literary discourse, texts are always required to be authenticated by an author's name.<sup>255</sup> Two aspects of this argumentation are to be expanded, and to some extent, revised.<sup>256</sup> First, the 'author-function' and the related processes are also active in the literary discourses of historical periods other than the modern era.<sup>257</sup> Second, I think that the inconstancy of the 'author-function' occurs, more significantly, from a synchronic point of view, in every civilisation, and even for the texts that are to be analysed within the performative discourse (i.e. song-texts). This inconsistency brings about a fundamental (synchronic) dichotomy between performative contexts in which the 'author-function' is

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Barthes' proclamation of 'the death of the author' in 1968 (cf. now Barthes 1977), as a response to it. These two essays have triggered a far from unanimously agreed discussion on the notions and various functions of author/authorship: see (with further bibliography) Hix 1987; Woodmansee–Jaszi 1994; Love 2002.

<sup>255</sup> Foucault seems to imply that the importance of the author's function became fully developed no earlier than the seventeenth or eighteenth century (cf. also Foucault 1991: 453f.). Cf. *supra* n. 72.

<sup>256</sup> We need to be very wary of Foucault's historical excursuses. They are very frequently simplified narratives of radical changes (the 'before/after' dichotomy is quite prominent), when attention to subject-specific scholarship shows that the picture is actually more complicated. See e.g. Maslov 2015: 51f. with n. 52.

<sup>257</sup> Authenticating a text through a *nomen auctoris* – whether real or mythical – was also relevant to ancient classical scholarship (cf. Condello 2011: 504-506). See also §1.2.3. Outside Classics, see e.g. the importance of the relationship between *auctores* and *auctoritas* in medieval schooling (Minnis 1984).

operating and those in which the same function is not. When the ‘author-function’ is not operating, texts are not authorised by an authorial voice, and in this sense, they can be considered ‘anonymous’. From here onwards, it is important to bear in mind that, in the performative discourse, the authorial voice may not only correspond to the original (or putative) author-composer of a song-text, but also to its actual performer(s), who may likewise hold an authorial/authorising voice.<sup>258</sup>

While, in the case of an operating ‘author-function’, the authorship entails textual authorisation and authentication, anonymity can conversely be interpreted in the sense that the authority/identity of who is speaking is absent or not relevant under determined conditions and in specific contexts, that is to say, when the ‘author-function’ is not operating. Viewed in this light, anonymous texts (and song-texts) can be understood as ‘unauthorised’ compositions, so far as they do not require any kind of authorial authorisation. We have anonymous (in the sense of unauthorised) songs, when one’s knowledge of who is speaking – whether the composer or the performer – is not essential for the purposes of the performance itself. The question is no longer whether an historical authorial figure can be really identified or not in the textual transmission. Rather, the crucial point is to identify those performative contexts in which the ‘author-function’ is absent or irrelevant, regardless of whether the authorship (real or fictional) is known or not. I argue that the ‘author-function’ is never operating when songs are mainly used and perceived from a functional-occasional perspective. I have previously labelled these songs as folk songs. Now we can say that folk songs are also ‘anonymous’, in the sense of being ‘unauthorised’. Let me clarify this view, firstly by stressing the importance, in song performances, of the ‘author-function’, and the related processes of textual authorisation, with specific regard to ancient Greece.<sup>259</sup> Secondly I shall turn to offer specific examples of song performances in which the ‘author-function’ is not operating, even where the authorship of the songs at issue may sometimes be known.

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<sup>258</sup> The author-composer and the author-performer of a song-text may or may not coincide.

<sup>259</sup> Recent scholarship on ancient Greek (and Roman) culture has drawn increasing attention to the new issues concerning the notions of author and authorship, by focusing not so much on the historical, authorial figures behind the ancient texts, but rather on what lies behind an author’s voice, or, in Foucauldian terms, on the ‘author-function’. Cf. the various contributions in Calame–Chartier 2004; Roscalla 2006; Marmodoro–Hill 2013; Bakker 2017. On the general applicability of the notion ‘author-function’ to ancient Greek song culture and literature, cf. Condello 2011. On the development of the concept of authorship in early Greece, see Beecroft 2010 (with an interdisciplinary discussion on China) and Maslov 2015: 36-116.

In concerts, festivals and music compositions, when the songs are perceived primarily from a self-standing perspective (cf. §1.3.2), knowing who is speaking – who is the performer/composer – is an important aspect. To some extent, the authorial voice, representing a specific identity, serves to authenticate and authorise the performance itself. Broadly speaking, a song perceived in its own right (i.e. from a stand-alone perspective) is at the same time perceived as an authorial song. It does not belong to the audience, but to a well-defined authorial figure.<sup>260</sup> This is generally valid even in antiquity. It is not by chance that the most ancient poetic ‘signatures’ (σφραγίδες) transmitted to us derive from texts that were presumably performed in agonistic contexts, whether these are rhapsodic proems (Hes. *Theog.* 22-23, *H. Hom. Ap.* 171-173) or lyric compositions, from Alcman (*PMGF* 17 and 39) up until Timotheus (*PMG* 791.229-236).<sup>261</sup> In music competitions (ancient and modern), the identity of who is speaking is essential for the piece’s public judgment and appreciation.<sup>262</sup>

Besides, especially for the authorial names ‘Homer’ and ‘Hesiod’, what mattered was not so much the historical identity of such names as what these authorial personae represented in terms of performative authorisation. As has been amply illustrated by Gregory Nagy, the various rhapsodes performing Homeric or Hesiodic poetry spoke through the authoritative voices of these (putative) first composers/performers, i.e. Homer and Hesiod. To some degree, they identified with them, and by means of such identification, Homeric and Hesiodic performances were always and continuously authenticated.<sup>263</sup> Similar positions have also been expressed with regard to the seal of Theognis (19-28), which has been analysed not as the copyright imprinted by an historical figure to his own work, but rather as the device codifying and authorising a body of gnomic and aristocratic poetry for future reperformances.<sup>264</sup>

The authorship of compositions in performance and the related processes of authorisation do not exclusively depend on the identity of the first composer/performer – whether a real poet or a mythical figure – but can also entail further and more complex relationships between the original authorial voice and what the actual performers may

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<sup>260</sup> For instance, if we attend the concert of our favourite singer-song writer, or even of our favourite pop artist, it is essential that it is they on the stage, not someone else, performing their own songs.

<sup>261</sup> On these passages, cf. Calame 2004: 13-19; Condello 2011: 513. On Homer and Hesiod as ‘authors’, see *infra* n. 263.

<sup>262</sup> On public judgment and appreciation in Hellenistic audiences, cf. Chaniotis 2009.

<sup>263</sup> On Homer as ‘author’, see Nagy 1979: 297-300; Nagy 1990: 22, 372-377; Nagy 1996: 19, 62f., 70-74, 80f., 86, 150, 220. On Hesiod as ‘author’, see Nagy 1979: 296f.; Nagy 1990a: 47-50; Nagy 1992.

<sup>264</sup> See e.g. Ford 1985; Bakker 2017a.



impersonate on stage. This is especially apparent in choral lyric and in those ambiguous cases that are the first-person forms. Nagy (1990: 339-381) deals with similar issues in Alcman's *Partheneion* 1, by showing how the authorship of the composition (in performance) lies in the authority of the Choregus (itself a fictional character), an authority which however emanates from the 'I' represented by the Chorus, through which, in turn, Alcman speaks. Equally problematic are Pindar's epinicians, in which the range of authorising voices and of 'author-functions' may include, among others, the poet as an inspired figure, the identity of the performer(s), or even the text itself configured as the keeper of a poetic, mythical tradition (or a polyphonic mixture of all three).<sup>265</sup> Alcman's *Partheneion* 1 and the Pindaric epinicians are compositions clearly endowed with an authorising voice, whatever this voice could represent in their respective performances. Such compositions, even though they undoubtedly held specific ritual and occasional functions, were also used and perceived from a self-standing perspective, as the musical climax of a particular event. As such, they were to be authorised by an authorial voice.<sup>266</sup>

Different is the situation in those contexts where the songs – which I have proposed to label as 'folk' – are mainly performed and perceived from a functional-occasional perspective. Folk songs are essentially auxiliary to the various occasions they accompany. Folk groups sharing them are not attending a long-awaited performance by a famous artist, but are rather taking part in a particular event to which the act of singing is somehow subsidiary and functional. In these specific contexts of use and consumption, (folk) songs do not require any kind of external, authorial authority. If anything, they are authorised internally, by the fact itself that they are an integral part of a traditional event (cf. §1.3.3). Within it, folk songs are shared and to some extent appropriated by the various folk groups. Knowing the authorial voice is therefore irrelevant for the performance of folk songs, because who is speaking is the same members of the various folk groups. In other words, folk songs are performed without an operating 'author-function'. Hence, folk songs can be considered as anonymous, unauthorised compositions belonging to the various folk groups who share them.

The absence of the 'author-function' is most evident when there is no audience, or, to put it differently, when there is no distinction between the performers ('producers') and the

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<sup>265</sup> See e.g. Maslov 2015: 97-166; Harden 2017; Stehle 2017.

<sup>266</sup> On the use and perception of Alcman's *Partheneion* 1, cf. Budelmann 2013 (mentioned also *supra*, §1.3.2).

audiences ('consumers').<sup>267</sup> For instance, one may think of work songs, whose 'producers' and 'consumers' are both to be identified with the members of the various occupational groups who share them. When songs are used as an accompaniment to a work activity, they do not need to be authorised by an (external) authorial voice. Who is speaking are the same members of the various occupational groups, to which the work songs belong, no matter who (and with which intentions) has originally composed/performed them. The absence of the 'author-function' can also be noticed when 'producers' and 'consumers' do not coincide, such as in the case of begging songs performed by children going from home to home in search of gifts. In the Rhodian *chelidonisma* (*PMG* 848, cf. Ch. 2), the children-performers speak through plural first-person forms, and in the end, they reveal their own identity: 'we are not old men, but children' (οὐ γὰρ γέροντές ἐσμεν, ἀλλὰ παῖδιά, l. 20). The revelation is too generic *per se* to hold an authorising function: the children of *PMG* 848 can indeed be anybody. They are the children who are actually performing the song, but they are also the older men who were once the children performing the same or a similar song. Besides, they are the children that are going to perform the same song the following year at the arrival of spring. Viewed in these terms, *PMG* 848 belongs to the Rhodian community that every year attended and shared this performance. To some extent, the children of *PMG* 848 represent the entire community.

Both begging and work songs are texts usually transmitted anonymously. In light of the aforementioned considerations, their anonymous transmission should no longer point to particular contexts of origin and production, but should rather indicate a specific folk-mode of use and reception. Being chiefly used and perceived from an occasional-functional perspective, begging and work songs are accordingly used and perceived as anonymous, unauthorised compositions. They are not anonymous by their nature, but the gradual disappearance of the author's identity is somehow related to the way they are used and perceived. In other words, begging and work songs are transmitted anonymously due to the irrelevance of the 'author-function' in their usual contexts of use and consumption. Anonymous transmission is undoubtedly a useful clue for interpreting folk songs as anonymous, unauthorised compositions. This does not mean that all anonymously transmitted texts are folk texts.<sup>268</sup>

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<sup>267</sup> Folk songs can be shared by folk groups in various ways. On the one hand, the members of folk groups can be at the same time the performers and the audiences (e.g. work songs). On the other hand, folk groups can share and/or sing their own songs through the medium of specific performers (e.g. begging songs and liturgical songs).

<sup>268</sup> One may think to the 25 Attic skolia (*PMG* 884-908), transmitted anonymously by Athenaeus (15.693f-696a), but sometimes ascribable to renowned authors (cf. e.g. *PMG* 891 = Alc. fr. 249.6-9 V.; see Fabbro

Conversely, we should reflect upon a quite different situation: authorial songs that feature, in determined contexts, a non-operative ‘author-function’.

A first example is Ariphron’s hymn to Health (*PMG* 813), which I also discussed earlier (§1.3.2). The name ‘Ariphron’, as the supposed composer of the hymn, is transmitted to us only by Athenaeus (15.702a). In the *Deipnosophistae*, the hymn is presented as a sympotic song, and, in turn, is quoted in the literary context of a fictional symposium, which nowadays represents the largest extant collection of ancient Greek literary quotations. The quotation of *PMG* 813 is therefore inserted into a complex bibliographic reference system. For Athenaeus it is important to declare his sources, and in some cases the authorship of the literary texts quoted, in order to authenticate those texts as proper literary texts. Viewed in these terms, the *Deipnosophistae* offer a model of ‘author-function’ appropriate to an archival culture.<sup>269</sup>

On the other hand, as analysed above, Ariphron’s hymn to Health was also used and performed in the daily liturgy at the sanctuary of Epidauros (during certainly the imperial period, but also presumably even earlier). In this performative context, *PMG* 813 can be interpreted as a folk song, and accordingly it can be used and perceived as an anonymous, unauthorised song. Performed as a liturgical hymn, and functional to the ceremony to which it was subordinated, the hymn to Health features a non-operative ‘author-function’. The religious community at Epidauros primarily attended the ritual routine, and only secondarily did it listen to, and maybe join in with, the singing of this hymn. We do not know who the actual performers were: presumably a local team of more or less trained cantors.<sup>270</sup> However, their specific identities, as far as there was an identity of the supposed author of the text (Ariphron), were irrelevant, and thus non-authorising, for the purposes of the performance itself. A comparison can be made with modern liturgical hymns. For instance, Anglican or Catholic hymns are

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1995: 120-122). Although the main source transmitted these texts without the authors’ names, it is likely that, in the context of a real sympotic performance, the Attic skolia were ascribed or felt by the various performers/singers as belonging to an authorial tradition, whether authentic or invented. With specific regard to the Sapphic papyrus from Cologne (*P. Köln* inv. 21351+21376, third century BC), Pitotto and Raschieri (2017) talk about a ‘performance-oriented’ conception of authorship (as opposed to an ‘authenticity-oriented’ one) in sympotic chains (or even in public competitions): ‘By this [*scil.* ‘performance-oriented’ authorship] we mean that the authorship of a given song was attributed by a given singer – and accepted by his or her public – through texts displaying traits that could easily be linked with a poetic tradition under a given name, taking advantage of the fact that archaic poetic traditions had no fixed boundaries but varied significantly in time, space, and socio-political contingency’ (p. 282).

<sup>269</sup> On this interpretation, see Jacob 2004.

<sup>270</sup> Wagman 1995: 35 n. 18; Wagman 2012: 223 n. 13.

generally composed and set to music by known authors (if little known), and for good commercial reasons, they appear in hymnbooks with the author's name and even an indication of copyright. However, in the ritual routine of the Mass, modern liturgical hymns tend to be performed without their own authorship emerging. In this case, as in the case of *PMG* 813, they belong to the various religious communities (or folk groups) who share the same repertoire.<sup>271</sup>

A further example of authorial song, interpretable within a context of non-operative 'author-function', is the hymn to Heracles attributed to Archilochus (fr. sp. 324 W.<sup>2</sup>):

τήνελλα καλλίνικε  
χαῖρε ἄναξ Ἡράκλεις,  
αὐτός τε καϊόλαος, αἰχμητὰ δύω.

Tenella gloriously triumphant,  
hail lord Heracles,  
both you and Iolaus, a pair of warriors.<sup>272</sup>

The hymn is quoted and attributed to Archilochus by the Pindaric scholia on the basis of the incipit of Pindar's *Olympian* 9, which mentions a triple Archilochean refrain sung at Olympia on the occasion of the Panhellenic Games.<sup>273</sup> Modern scholars have questioned the hymn's authorship to Archilochus.<sup>274</sup> In particular, West (1974: 138f.) has ascribed the text to the *carmina popularia* because of its metre, dialect and content.<sup>275</sup> In my opinion, the hymn to Heracles can still be considered as an anonymous folk song, not due to specific formal criteria,

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<sup>271</sup> A further example would be the poems by Prudentius. These were not originally intended for the liturgy (see e.g. Westra 2007: 11f.), but they have become – usually by adaptation – part of the Christian hymnic repertoire performed during the Mass. The most famous adaptation is *Of the Father's Love Begotten*, based on the Latin poem *Corde natus* (Prudent. *Cath.* 9).

<sup>272</sup> Transl. Gerber 1999: 283. On this text, see Neri 2011: 48 (translation), 196f. (commentary), 344 (full list of testimonia and critical apparatus); Pòrtulas 2012: 223-228.

<sup>273</sup> Pind. *Ol.* 9.1-4 τὸ μὲν Ἀρχιλόχου μέλος / φωνᾶεν Ὀλυμπία, καλλίνικος ὁ τριπλόος κεχλαδῶς, / ἄρκεσε Κρόνιον παρ' ὄχθον ἀγεμονεῦσαι / κωμάζοντι φίλοις Ἐφαρμόστῳ σὺν ἐταίροις. The adjective τριπλόος may refer either to the threefold singing of the refrain τήνελλα καλλίνικε or (less likely) to three strophes of the song: cf. *schol. ad Ol.* 9.1k (= 1.268.12-23 Dr., *ap.* Eratosth. *FGrH* 241 F 44) and *schol. ad Ol.* 9.3g (= 1.269.11-12 Dr.).

<sup>274</sup> The ancients would have misinterpreted the Pindaric passage and would have attributed to Archilochus a different type of song (cf. Pòrtulas 2012: 226f.).

<sup>275</sup> 'What we have before us, then, is a little song that would best be included with the *carmina popularia*' (West 1974: 139). Cf. already Lasserre 1958: 79 ('Il n'est pas certain cependant que ce chant soit d'Archiloque. Des anciens déjà en doutaient. Peut-être n'est ce qu'un hymne populaire').

and regardless of the grounds of the alleged Archilochean authorship.<sup>276</sup> Rather, one should look at the specific mode of use and perception that this kind of song might have experienced. In this same regard, the Pindaric scholia also provide some information about their own performative context. According to some interpreters, τήνελλα was an onomatopoeic word evoking the sound of the lyre.<sup>277</sup> This term (and what followed in the hymn) was invented and composed by Archilochus, and later on, it became customary for the winners (and their companions) to celebrate the Olympic victory by singing the same refrain or hymn. So much is reported by the following Pindaric scholium (*schol. ad Ol.* 9.1f-h = 1.267-268 Dr.):

ὁ Ἀρχίλοχος, πρὸ τούτων τῶν λυρικῶν γενόμενος, θελήσας ὕμνον ἀναβαλέσθαι εἰς Ἡρακλέα ἐν τῇ Ὀλυμπίᾳ, ἀπορήσας κιθαρωδοῦ διὰ τινος λέξεως μιμήσασθαι τὸν ῥυθμὸν καὶ τὸν ἦχον τῆς κιθάρας ἐπεχείρησε. συντάξας οὖν τοῦτο τὸ ‘τήνελλα’, οὕτω τὰ ἐξῆς ἀνεβάλλετο [...]. κεκράτηκεν οὖν ἐπὶ πάντων νικηφόρων παρ’ αὐτὸν τὸν καιρὸν τῆς νίκης ἐπάδεσθαι τὸ κόμμα [...]. ἔθος δὲ ἦν κωμάζειν τὴν νίκην ἐσπέρας τοῖς νικηφόροις μετ’ αὐλητοῦ· μὴ παρόντος δὲ αὐλητοῦ εἷς τῶν ἐταίρων ἀνακρουόμενος ἔλεγε ‘τήνελλα καλλίνικε’.

Archilochus, who was born before these lyric poets, wished to strike up a hymn to Heracles at Olympia, but lacking a lyre player he tried to imitate the rhythm and sound of the lyre by means of a word. He therefore composed this word τήνελλα and in this way struck up what followed [...]. Consequently, it has been the practice for all winners to sing out the coinage right at the moment of victory [...]. It was customary for winners to celebrate the victory in the evening with a piper. But if a piper was not present, one of the companions struck up the words τήνελλα καλλίνικε.<sup>278</sup>

Another scholium (*ad Ol.* 9.1i = 1.268.5-10 Dr.) stresses the universal applicability of the Archilochean hymn to the different types of celebrations for the various Olympic victors of the moment:

τὸ μὲν Ἀρχιλόχου μέλος, ὃ τοῖς νικῶσι τὰ Ὀλύμπια ἐπῆδετο, ἦν τρίστροφον, κοινῶς δυνάμενον ἀρμόζειν ἐπὶ παντὸς νικηφόρου διὰ τὸ κατὰ τῆς πράξεως αὐτῆς ψιλὸν ἔχειν τὸν λόγον, μήτε δὲ ὄνομα μήτε ἰδίωμα ἀγωνίσματος. ἐφ’ ὧν δὲ κατεχρῶντο τοῦτο,

<sup>276</sup> On Archilochus as author of cult poetry, see however Pòrtulas 2012: 228-231.

<sup>277</sup> Cf. also *schol. Ar. Av.* 1764 Holwerda.

<sup>278</sup> Transl. Gerber 1999: 285.

‘τήνελλα καλλίνικε’.

The song of Archilochus, which was sung at Olympia for the winners, consisted of three strophes and was able to suit every winner alike, since it did not mention the event or the name of the winner or the nature of the contest. And they used this refrain τήνελλα καλλίνικε.<sup>279</sup>

A similar piece of information, explicitly ascribed to Aristarchus, is found in a scholium to *Nemean* 3 (*ad Nem.* 3.1c = 3.41.16-20 Dr.), by implying that the Archilochean hymn was sung to celebrate the victory whenever ad hoc compositions were not available:

ὁ μὲν οὖν Ἀρίσταρχός φησιν, ἥτοι τὸν χορὸν ὑπὸ τὸν καιρὸν τῆς νίκης αὐτοσχέδιόν τινα ἐπίνικον ᾄσαι, ἢ τὸν Ἀρχιλόχου καλλίνικον, οὗ καὶ τὸν Πίνδαρον μνημονεύειν διὰ τούτων (*Ol.* 9.1). ‘τὸ μὲν Ἀρχιλόχου μέλος φωνᾷεν’ καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς.

Aristarchus says that either the chorus sang an improvised epinician at the moment of victory or the triumphal song of Archilochus (καλλίνικον) and that Pindar alludes to the latter with these words τὸ μὲν Ἀρχιλόχου μέλος φωνᾷεν, etc.<sup>280</sup>

Although the information appears to be inconsistent in some points, the scholiasts describe a performative context in which the occasional-functional perspective was likely to be dominant. If the hymn to Heracles was primarily used – performed by a Chorus or by the victors themselves – as a sports anthem to celebrate the victory at the Olympic Games (and presumably in other types of sports competitions as well), the same song is to be considered not only as a traditional song – as part of recurring sports celebrations (synchronic reperformances) – but also as an anonymous, unauthorised song. As a sports anthem, the hymn to Heracles did not require any kind of authorial authorisation. Even if Archilochus’s authorship were accepted, this authorial voice/identity would not have emerged in the performative contexts just illustrated, where the ‘author-function’ was not operating. In other circumstances, instead, as reflected in the literary discourses of Pindar and then of the scholia, it was important to remember and mention the name of Archilochus as the original author.

To better clarify this point, I may refer to some examples quite far away from the field of Classics. Think of the two modern songs *We Are the Champions*, by the rock-band Queen, and the so-called *Nessun dorma*, the final aria of Giacomo Puccini’s opera *Turandot*. The

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<sup>279</sup> Transl. Gerber 1999: 285, 287.

<sup>280</sup> Transl. Gerber 1999: 287.

authorial origin of these compositions is unquestionable. Yet, they are often performed on the occasion of various sports competitions, especially in football, in order to celebrate the victorious team of the moment. Some of the audiences at the stadium, listening to and presumably singing the songs – or just their catchy refrains (‘We are the champions of the world’ and ‘All’alba vincerò’) – may know their authorial origins and their original performative contexts. All the same, the ‘author-function’ of the two compositions is invalid in that particular context of use and consumption. The performances of the two compositions are not in the foreground as the central event, as they may be when performed in a theatre or concert hall, but are part of a traditional event – the celebration of athletes – in which they serve as anonymous sports anthems. Likewise, the Archilochean hymn to Heracles can still be considered a traditional as well as an anonymous folk song, without either rejecting perforce the alleged authorship or resorting to peculiar criteria of sophistication, e.g. by pointing to preconceived (lowbrow) contexts of origin and composition. Rather, it can be said that the universal applicability of the hymn and its easily remembered refrain *τήνελλα καλλίνικε*<sup>281</sup> – which must have been almost catchy as ‘We are the champions’ and ‘vincerò’ – encouraged the continuous reuse and appropriation of the text as a sports anthem, in doing so revealing a folk-mode of use and perception.

It is time to sum up what has been observed so far about the anonymity criterion and to highlight what further perspectives my approach can open up, before we turn individually to the folk songs themselves. I have analysed anonymity not as a given textual category innately attached to folk songs, but as a useful element for interpreting the folk-mode of use and reception. In their specific contexts of use and consumption, folk songs, as mainly perceived from a functional perspective, are not anonymous *per se*, but are rather perceived as anonymous, unauthorised songs. This means that the authorising and authenticating role of the authorial voice/identity – thus considered in Foucauldian terms as a functional category – proves to be irrelevant for the performative purposes. Certainly, anonymous transmission can be helpful in defining a core of texts that can be seen as folk/anonymous in both circulation and reception (cf. e.g. begging and work songs). Yet, even texts with an attested authorial origin (whether actual or fictional) can be considered anonymous if they are used and perceived in a

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<sup>281</sup> The exclamation *τήνελλα* is used as a kind of ‘hip, hip, hooray!’ in several Aristophanic passages (see Pòrtulas 2012: 226 n. 11). The term *καλλίνικος* also occurs in Pindar and in Euripides (in *HF* the term always refers to Heracles), see Gerber 2002: 22. Cf. also *ἱεροκαλλίνικοι* in the Epidaurian hymn to ‘All the Gods’, l. 14 (see Wagman 1995: 67).

folk-mode. The crucial point is to understand not who has actually composed a song, but whether the ‘author-function’ is valid or not in a given performative context.

Let us conclude by noticing the potential relationship between the anonymity criterion so interpreted and the communal authorship. As unauthorised songs, folk songs are somehow appropriated by their producers/consumers (or folk groups), and in this sense folk songs truly belong to the various social groups who share them. Folk groups ‘own’ these songs, and therefore they have the right to modify their own songs to such an extent that variants may sometimes be generated. Variants are not to be seen as a constant of folk poetry, but as a potential consequence that results from the specific way in which folk songs are used and perceived. Variants can also be adopted in epic poetry by the performers of Homer, but, in this specific case, the same variants are authorised by Homer as ‘author-function’ (cf. *supra*). In the case of folk songs, variants represent the result of a communal creation, which is, in turn, a consequence of the songs’ communal ownership.<sup>282</sup>

### 1.3.5 Final remarks

My conceptualisation of folksong in this last part of the Introduction (§1.3) has placed especial emphasis on the contexts of reception and perception over the contexts of production and composition. From this perspective, folk songs are no longer interpreted as oral, unsophisticated, anonymous and traditional, in opposition to what is written, sophisticated, authorial and modern. Such binary oppositions result only from a preconceived distinction of folk (lowbrow) poetry and literary (highbrow) poetry, a distinction which does not really account for what a folk song is, but which instead *a priori* defines sets of texts as ‘folk’ after deciding on what a folk song should not be. I have tried to demonstrate that a folk song can still be considered oral, anonymous and traditional, not because it is composed under certain conditions and for specific social categories, but due to the modalities in which the song is used and perceived by its users. These users correspond to varied social groups that can be termed ‘folk groups’ (in Dundes’ terminology). Besides, texture and formal features can sometimes be helpful in determining this folk-mode of perception, but they do not necessarily result in preconceived (lowbrow) contexts of origin and composition. Folk songs are oral because they are actualised in oral reperformances, regardless of their original processes of composition and transmission, processes from which the use of writing cannot be excluded *a priori*. In their

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<sup>282</sup> On the relationship between communal creation and communal ownership in oral poetry as a whole, see Finnegan 1977: 201-206.



contexts of reperformance – which have been interpreted as synchronic reperformances – folk songs are primarily perceived from an occasional-functional perspective over a self-standing one. Features such as basic style and simple structure may point to the universal applicability of certain songs, and they may be more apt than others to be perceived from a functionalist perspective, and therefore to be appropriated by folk groups. Accordingly, folk songs can be considered traditional not because they can be traced back to an undefined ancient origin, but because they are part of a traditional, recurring event, in which folk groups share and appropriate the event's songs for specific purposes. Finally, the songs so used and perceived do not need to be authorised by an authorial voice/identity. In Foucauldian terms, we can speak of the folk songs' non-operative 'author-function'. Folk songs are anonymous not so much because their authorship is unknown, but because they are used and perceived as unauthorised compositions. In this sense, they belong to the various folk groups who share them. Due to this ownership, folk groups have the possibility and the right to modify their own songs by means of variants.

My conceptualisation has the advantage of looking at folk songs not as ready-made sets of texts. Certainly, genres such as begging songs and work songs are more easily attributable to the realm of folksong. Yet, begging and work songs do not represent a given textual category. Rather, it can be said these texts are generally used and perceived in a way that can be defined as the folk-mode of reception. This approach is in step with the most innovative theories and methodologies adopted in the field of folkloristics, theories and methodologies that do not focus on the 'who' and on the 'what' but explore the 'how'. Folklore is therefore interpreted as a form of cultural appropriation, which everyone may take a part in. Furthermore, my conceptualisation is able to offer a better understanding of both what the texts included in the *carmina popularia* represented in their performative contexts and of how the learned approached these texts in antiquity. In the chapters that follow, I shall show that even folk songs were involved in the so-called process of textualisation (cf. §1.2.1.i), and that, therefore, they could be studied as proper poems as well as analysed in a literary discourse. This view is supported by the fact that the notion of folksong here illustrated is not in direct opposition to the category of literature. The boundaries separating what is 'folk' and what is 'literary' are not fixed, and more importantly, they do not depend on concrete and well-defined criteria. A folk song is such because it is used and perceived in a determined modality, but the same song-text can be used and perceived differently in different contexts of reception and analysis, such as literary reception and analysis.

In the chapters to follow, I shall extend this approach and conceptualisation that has been delineated in my Introduction to the specific analysis of some ancient Greek texts included in the *carmina popularia*. In the next two chapters, I shall discuss in detail the genres of begging songs – with a particular focus on *PMG* 848 (ch. 2) – and work songs, through the analysis of *PMG* 849 and 869 (ch. 3). In the fourth and last chapter, I shall discuss more broadly some cult and ritual songs present in the collection (*PMG* 847, 851, 854, 860, 862, 864, 868, 870, 871). In general, I retain in each chapter the format of a thematic commentary, which is why the texts examined are printed together with a revised critical apparatus, translation, and comparanda. But I avoid the disjunctive style of a lemmatic commentary and give each chapter a continuous narrative and argument better suited to the goals of my dissertation. My analysis will not only be undertaken from a linguistic, stylistic and metrical point of view, but it will also take into consideration the performative contexts of use and consumption, as well as the reception of the texts from the perspective of the ancient scholars and other literati. The aim is not to identify songs that are folk by their nature and songs that are not folk in absolute terms, but to stress that the same kinds of texts can be interpreted in different ways (folk and/or literate), according to their different modalities of use and reception.

## Chapter 2: The Rhodian *chelidonisma* (PMG 848) and the tradition of the begging songs in ancient Greece

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### 2.0 Introduction

We usually call ‘begging’ (or ‘quête’) songs those songs which are performed in order to carry out the function of the begging for food or alms.<sup>1</sup> In turn – as discussed in the previous chapter (§1.3) – begging songs can be considered as folk songs since they are primarily perceived from this functional-occasional perspective in their typical contexts of performance. In this chapter, I shall demonstrate to what extent my conceptualisation of folksong is relevant to the analysis of begging songs in ancient Greece as well. There are five extant texts related to the ritual practice of begging: the Rhodian *chelidonisma* (PMG 848), the *koronisma* by Phoenix of Colophon (fr. 2 D.<sup>3</sup>), the Samian *eiresione* attributed to Homer ([Hom.] *Ep.* 14 Markwald), the Attic *eiresione* (*carm. pop.* 17 Edmonds), and the song of the Sicilian shepherds (PMG 882).<sup>2</sup> The main focus of my analysis will be on PMG 848, its nature and its relationship with the other four main texts. Before launching into the main discussion, it is useful to present an overview of the texts at hand.

The Attic *eiresione* and PMG 882, though both are related to the begging tradition for different reasons, seem to be quite distinct in terms of their style and structure from the *chelidonisma*, the *koronisma* and the Samian *eiresione*. The crucial difference is that the latter three compositions feature direct references to the act of begging in the text itself, whereas the former two do not.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the latter group more closely reflects the European custom, as is still practised today, consisting of groups of men, young people or children, who, sometimes

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<sup>1</sup> The online edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* offers the following definition of ‘quête song’: ‘A song traditionally sung as an accompaniment to the collecting of donations for the performers during or at the end of a folk play’ ([https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/quete\\_song](https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/quete_song)). What is meant by ‘folk play’ remains unclear. On the broadest level, we can consider as begging songs all songs performed by buskers, who are generally rewarded with money or other gifts.

<sup>2</sup> On these texts and the ancient Greek tradition of the begging songs as a whole, see Ilgen 1797; Schönberger 1980; Lambin 1992: 351-375; De Stefani 2000; Palumbo Stracca 2014 and 2014a. Cf. also Robertson 1983, who examines a series of female begging rituals associated with the cults of different gods in different regions of Greece.

<sup>3</sup> For a comparative analysis of the *chelidonisma*, the *koronisma* and the Samian *eiresione*, see §2.1.

when dressed up in costumes and making use of extemporised totems,<sup>4</sup> travel from home to home on some festive occasion, asking for gifts such as food and drink.<sup>5</sup> This ritual activity is often accompanied by songs and/or refrains. Today the most famous example of such a song is the custom at Halloween to knock on one's neighbours' doors and ask them, 'Trick or treat?', as is practised by children in costumes carrying carved lanterns in pumpkins. Of the ancient corpus, the texts of all five begging songs will be presented, where appropriate, in the next section. Let us now introduce them by providing some guidelines on their sources and their performative contexts, along with further general information.

The *chelidonisma* (PMG 848) is transmitted by Athenaeus (8.360b-d), who in turn quotes as his source the work Περὶ τῶν ἐν Πόδι θυσίων of a certain Theognis (FGH 526 F 1).<sup>6</sup> The *chelidonisma* was performed by children from the island of Rhodes to celebrate the return of spring,<sup>7</sup> a seasonal event that was announced by the arrival of the swallow (cf. PMG

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<sup>4</sup> I am using the term 'totem' in the sense of a visual representation of a (animate or inanimate) subject which symbolically identifies the beggars and their performance.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Herzfeld 2004: 378f. ('what folklorists call a *quête* – a custom in which the children of the community visit all the houses, demanding some symbolic gift and threatening violence against the persons and property of any who might dare to refuse').

<sup>6</sup> On Theognis, a historian of unknown origin (Rhodes?) and date (3rd or 2nd century BC?), see Mori 2016. The term *chelidonisma* (χελιδόνισμα) is not attested beyond the specific references of Theognis (χελιδονίζειν) and a lexical entry in Hesychius (χ 324 Cunn. χελιδονισταί). Parallel forms are κορωνισταί/κορωνίσματα (Ath. 8.360b, Hsch. κ 3748 L.). Just as the κορωνισταί who sang κορωνίσματα (cf. *infra*), the χελιδονισταί probably sang χελιδονίσματα.

<sup>7</sup> According to Athenaeus' text, the Rhodian swallow begging is held τῷ Βοηδρομιῶνι μηνί, which in the Attic calendar corresponds to September-October. In all probability – as most scholars argue (Smyth 1900: 507; Buchholz 1909: 184; Edmonds 1940: 527 n. 2; Morelli 1963: 121f. n. 1; Adrados 1974: 47 n. 1; De Stefani 2000: 83 n. 10; Neri 2003: 203; Magnani 2013: 53-56) – Theognis or the manuscript tradition wrongly replaced the Rhodian month βαδρόμιος (February-March) with the Attic form βοηδρομιών (September-October). On the other hand, Lambin (1992: 365f.) maintains that the Rhodian begging tradition, originally placed in spring, had then been institutionalised in the βοηδρόμια, an Athenian festival in honour of Apollo βοηδρόμιος or βοηδρόμος, which was celebrated in the month of which this festival is an eponym (see Parker 2012: 236). In Lambin's view, the autumnal season would have been more suitable for the practice of collecting gifts, 'celliers et greniers étant pleins' (Lambin 1992: 366). Bergk (1858: v) had already formulated a similar hypothesis: since in spring there was not an abundance of products, it was decided in a certain moment to 'sub auctumni initium post messem conditam stipem colligere, atque vernum illud carmen hac occasionem adhibebant.'

848.1 ἦλθ', ἦλθε χελιδών).<sup>8</sup> Similar songs were likely to be widespread well beyond Rhodes, as is confirmed by the spring carols still chanted in various regions of Modern Greece.<sup>9</sup> In Neochori,<sup>10</sup> for example, a cortège of adults, boys and children, every year on spring break, performs a modern *chelidonisma* around the town.<sup>11</sup> The performers hold the image of a swallow that they spin with a piece of string, not unlike a spinning top. It cannot be excluded that even in ancient Greece the image of the swallow was concretely represented by such groups of beggars, perhaps through a sort of totemic object, which they brought with them to showcase from house to house, or by wearing clothing that reproduced the two-coloured (black and white) plumage of the bird.<sup>12</sup>

A similar performative context of children requesting and collecting gifts can be found in the *eiresione* songs, of which a Samian and an Attic version are transmitted. The former is part of the sixteen epigrams attributed to Homer and contained in his pseudo-Herodotean *Life* of that poet ([Hom.] *Ep.* 14 Markwald).<sup>13</sup> Leaving aside for the moment the issue of the Homeric attribution (cf. §2.1), the Samian *eiresione* is said to have long been performed by child-beggars from Samos in a festival in honour of Apollo.<sup>14</sup> The term εἰρεσιώνη indicated a

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<sup>8</sup> For the swallow 'as the bird of returning Spring', see Thompson 1936: 319. The topos also occurs in the proverb μία χελιδὼν ἔαρ οὐ ποιεῖ, from which many equivalents in modern languages derive (cf. Tosi, *DSL* no. 2090).

<sup>9</sup> In modern carols, the *incipit* of *PMG* 848 is retained with the same words (ἦρθε ἦρθε χελιδόνα) or similar expressions (χελιδόνα ἐρχεται). On some modern examples of swallow songs, see Passow (1860: 225-227); Smyth 1900: 507f.; Cessi 1933: 491f.; Jacob 1937: 242-246; Thompson 1936: 320; Beaton 1980: 137-141; Schönberger 1980: 64-74; Campbell 1982: 446f.; Lambin 1992: 365; Magnani 2013a: 572f. More generally, on the tradition of swallow songs in late antiquity and Byzantine and modern Greece, see (with further bibliography) Alexiou 2004: 100-102 and Herzfeld 2004.

<sup>10</sup> A village on the peninsula of Pelion, Magnesia, eastern Thessaly, Greece.

<sup>11</sup> See the audio-visual materials published on YouTube by Karanton 2013, 2015 and 2017.

<sup>12</sup> On such hypotheses, cf. Cerrato 1885: 326; Smyth 1900: 507; Jacob 1937: 233; Adrados 1974: 52; Snell 1976: 107; West 1993: 212.

<sup>13</sup> Markwald (1986) has published a critical edition, accompanied by commentary notes, of fifteen of the pseudo-Homeric epigrams.

<sup>14</sup> *Vit. Hom. Herod.* 33.462-482 All. παραχειμάζων [*scil.* Ὅμηρος] δὲ ἐν τῇ Σάμῳ, ταῖς νομηνίαις προσπορευόμενος πρὸς τὰς οἰκίας τὰς εὐδαιμονεστάτας, ἐλάμβανέ τι ἀείδων τὰ ἔπεα τάδε ἃ καλεῖται Εἰρεσιώνη, ὠδήγουν δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ συμπαρήσαν αἰεὶ τῶν παίδων τινὲς τῶν ἐγχωρίων [*Ep.* 14 Markwald]. ἦδετο δὲ τάδε τὰ ἔπεα ἐν τῇ Σάμῳ ἐπὶ πολὺν χρόνον ὑπὸ τῶν παίδων ὅτε ἀγείροιν ἐν τῇ ἑορτῇ τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος 'He [*scil.* Homer] spent the winter in Samos, and at New Moon he would go to the most well-favored houses and receive something for singing these verses, which are called *Eiresione*, and there were always some of the local children with him

big olive or laurel branch, wrapped in wool (possibly white and purple-stained) bandages and laden with all sorts of fruits.<sup>15</sup> The εἰρεσιώνη was likely to be carried by the child-beggars as a sort of totem during their performance.

For example, in Athens, the branch of the εἰρεσιώνη was carried in a procession – presumably by boys – at the Pyanepsia in honour of Apollo, to whom it was offered.<sup>16</sup> The short song that would accompany this ritual is known as the Attic *eiresione* (*carm. pop.* 17 Edmonds).<sup>17</sup> Neither the transmitted text – which may be incomplete – nor the authors who quote the poem, and who are presumably drawing on the same Atthidographic source, confirm that a collection of donations actually took place. Nevertheless, it cannot be excluded that rewards and gifts followed the performance of the Attic *eiresione* as well.<sup>18</sup>

More difficult to pin down is the performative context of the *koronisma*. The text is attributed to the iambographer Phoenix of Colophon (fr. 2 D.<sup>3</sup>) and transmitted by Athenaeus

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showing him the way: [*Ep.* 14 Markwald]. These verses went on being recited in Samos for a long time by the children when they went collecting at the feast of Apollo’ (transl. West 2003: 395, 397). Cf. also *Suda* ο 251 A. (= 176-197 All.), which directly depends on the pseudo-Herodotean *Life*.

<sup>15</sup> On the various etymological interpretations of the term, see Chantraine 1933: 208; Schönberger 1941; Grošelj 1951: 122f.; Chantraine, *DELG* 309 s.v.; Schönberger 1980: 26f.; Ruipérez 1999: 2.537-542; Beekes, *EDG* 390.

<sup>16</sup> A similar ritual is also attested in Delos, as is evidenced by a first-century BC inscription (*ID* 2081 ἐνέγκαν [τ] α τὴν εἰρυσιώνην τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι). The ritual carriage of a large branch of olive tree, variously decorated, occurred elsewhere but under different names. At the Theban *Daphnephoria* the κωπώ was offered, once again, to Apollo. The Doric equivalent was the κορυθάλη (or κορυθαλῖς), sacred to Artemis and carried in procession during the Spartan *Tithenidia*. In the lexicographical sources, the εἰρεσιώνη and the κορυθαλῖς are glossed as synonyms. Cf. Hsch. κ 3688 L. κορυθαλία· δάφνη ἐστεμμένη. τινὲς τὴν εἰρεσιώνην, Phot. ε 255 Th. καλοῦσι δὲ αὐτὸν [*scil.* κλάδον] καὶ κορυθάλειαν, *Etym. Magn.* 303,31f. Gaisf. καλοῦσι δὲ αὐτὴν [*scil.* εἰρεσιώνην] καὶ κορυθάλειαν. On the εἰρεσιώνη, κωπώ and κορυθαλῖς, and their related rituals, see Baudy 1997; Schachter 1997; Zingg 1999.

<sup>17</sup> The sources transmitting the Attic *eiresione* are numerous: Plut. *Vit. Thes.* 22.6f., Clem. Al. *Strom.* 4.2.7.3, *schol.*<sup>VEΓΘM</sup> Ar. *Eq.* 729a (I) Merv. J., *schol.*<sup>VEΘNBarbAld</sup> Ar. *Plut.* 1054e Ch., *schol.*<sup>Pm</sup> Clem. Al. *Protr.* 1.10.8 Marcovich, Phot. ε 254 Th., Phot. ε 255 Th., *Etym. Magn.* 303.18-37 Gaisf. (cf. *Et. Gen.* **AB** s.v., *Et. Sym.* **D** s.v.), *Suda* εἰ 184 A., Eust. *Il.* 1282.7-15, IV 666.1-14 v.d.V., Michael Choniates, *Carm.* 1.77-80, Apostol. 18,67 (*CPG* II 740f.). On further information about the Athenian ritual, cf. Ar. *Eq.* 728f., Plut. 1053f., Lycurg. *FGrH* 401c F 1a, Strab. 1.2.3, *schol.*<sup>VEΓΘ</sup> Ar. *Eq.* 729a (II) Merv. J., *schol.*<sup>Lh</sup> Ar. *Eq.* 729d Merv. J., *schol.* Ar. *Plut.* 1054a-d Ch., *Suda* δ 589 A., Lact. Plac. *Comm. in Stat. Theb.* 2.737-738, 12.492 Sweeney.

<sup>18</sup> On the basis of the above argumentum *ex silentio*, Palumbo Stracca (2014a: 245, 262) argues instead that the Attic *eiresione* cannot be considered a begging song proper.

(8.359e-360b) shortly before the passage in which the *chelidonisma* is quoted.<sup>19</sup> We do not know the original intent with which Phoenix's text was composed, nor whether it was actually performed or just intended for reading, but I believe that it can be plausibly considered a literary reworking when compared to one or more begging songs that spread all over Greece.<sup>20</sup> Ancient sources indeed attest the existence of so-called 'crow-beggars' named κορωνισταί, who performed songs called κορωνίσματα.<sup>21</sup> However, the specific occasions on which these songs were performed remain unclear. Nor is it clear whether children were a part of the performance or not.<sup>22</sup> By and large, the *koronismata* are regarded as the autumnal or winter equivalents of the *chelidonisma*.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>19</sup> On this passage and the sources involved, cf. *infra* nn. 68 and 69.

<sup>20</sup> Scholars are divided between those who consider Phoenix's intents as merely antiquarian – e.g. De Stefani (2000: 87-91), who argues that the *koronisma* is a literary replica of a traditional begging song – and those who see a more individual purpose in the adaptation of the text. On this latter view, see Gerhard 1909: 179-181; Wills 1970; Furley 1994. However varied these opinions are, the interpretations of these three scholars share one fundamental element: they all classify the *koronisma* a traditional song adapted to Phoenix's purposes as a wandering poet. Gerhard assigns Phoenix to the cynic school and accordingly considers the *koronisma* a sort of 'kynisches Bettellied', by means of which the wandering philosopher tried to co-opt followers and impart moral teachings. Wills believes that the figure of the crow-beggar represents Phoenix as a wandering poet in search of poetic patronage. Likewise, Furley holds that Phoenix is comparing the status as a wandering poet to the condition of a beggar: in other words, Phoenix is complaining about the loss of prestige of Hellenistic poets before aristocratic patronage. On the theme of the 'wandering poets' in antiquity, cf. the volume recently edited by Hunter–Rutherford 2009 and Cameron 2016. For a description of the Homeric *eiresione* in terms of wandering poetics as well, see Martin 2009: 98f.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Ath. 8.360b (quoted below 2.1), Hsch. κ 3748 L. κορωνισταί· οἱ τῇ κορώνῃ ἀγείροντες, καὶ τὰ ἀδόμενα ὑπ' αὐτῶν κορωνίσματα, Eust. *Od.* 1914.49f. St. ἄλλοι δέ τινες ἐκαλοῦντο κορωνισταί, οἷα τῇ κορώνῃ τῷ ζῳῷ ἀγείροντες καὶ τὰ ὑπ' αὐτῶν ἀδόμενα κορωνίσματα ἐλέγοντο· ὧν καὶ ἐκτίθεται τινα ὁ δειπνοσοφιστής.

<sup>22</sup> On the one hand, Athenaeus speaks of men 'who go begging for the crow' (Ath. 8.359e οἷδα δὲ Φοῖνικα τὸν Κολοφώνιον ἱαμβοποιὸν μνημονεύοντά τινων ἀνδρῶν ὡς ἀγείρόντων τῇ κορώνῃ). On the other hand, in l. 2 of Phoenix's text the crow is said to be 'Apollo's child' (τῇ παιδί τῷ πόλλωνος [*scil.* κορώνῃ, l. 1]). However, παῖς can be meant here metaphorically, i.e. 'child' = 'servant'. On this interpretation and for the crow's association with Apollo's mythology, see Furley 1994: 11; De Stefani 2000: 98f. In general, it cannot be excluded that the *koronismata*, as still happens among the modern *chelidonismata* (cf. *supra*), were performed by children sometimes accompanied by adults.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. De Stefani 2000: 83 with n. 11, 109f. Another hypothesis I can suggest is that the *koronismata* were intoned on the occasion of wedding rites. The crow is indeed the symbol of marital fidelity and harmony (cf. e.g. Ael. *NA* III 9), and occurs in the nuptial refrain ἐκκορὶ κορὶ κορώνῃ, also known as ἐκκόρει κόρει κορώνας (*PMG* 881, *ap.* Horap. *Hier.* I 8, *schol.*<sup>BDEFGQ</sup> Pind. *Pyth.* 3,32c Dr.). In the text of Phoenix, moreover, we find first a

To complete the picture, we must mention the song of the Sicilian shepherds (*PMG* 882). This text is quoted as part of an anecdote concerning the origin of bucolic poetry (*Proleg.* Theoc. Ba 2.21-Bb 3.15 Wend.). According to the ancient sources, the losers of singing contests in Syracuse had to roam from village to village begging for charity and singing entertaining and blessing-filled songs in return, such as the one transmitted to us. The structure of the text greatly differs from the one that can be detected in the *chelidonisma*, the *koronisma* and the Samian *eiresione*. In *PMG* 882, there is no direct reference to the act of begging; rather, the text resembles a blessing song more akin to the Attic *eiresione*.

In modern scholarship, we can detect some tensions in the interpretation of the ancient Greek begging-song tradition. These tensions mostly result from a notion of folksong that tends to sharply separate the anonymous texts (as authentically ‘folk’) and the authored ones (as ‘literary’ versions), often by supporting such a distinction with predetermined formal criteria.<sup>24</sup> It is not by chance that the anonymously transmitted *PMG* 848 and 882 have been included in all the modern collections of *carmina popularia*.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, the *koronisma* by Phoenix of Colophon has never appeared in an edition of the ancient Greek folk songs. The inclusion/exclusion of the Samian and Attic *eiresionai* is more debated, but the arguments adopted by scholars betray the incongruities resulting from a conceptualisation of folksong based on criteria of sophistication. Both the Samian and the Attic *eiresionai* are only included in the editions of Diehl (1925) and Edmonds (1940).<sup>26</sup> All other editors have omitted these texts from their collections of *carmina popularia*, presumably following the suggestion of Bergk,

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series of wedding wishes (ll. 10-14), and then a flattering address to the ‘young wife’ (νύμφη, l. 20). The first to compare Phoenix’s *koronisma* and the wedding refrain *PMG* 881 was Caussin (1727, 245-247). In his view, both of them would have been part of the same ritual complex, in which ‘puellae nobiles, ut ominatas consequerentur nuptias, iuebantur opimum prandium dare cornici’. Rituals of begging associated with wedding ceremonies can be found in the modern tradition of Italy. One may think to the Friulian custom of the ‘barriera’ (‘*traghèt*’ = ‘*tragetto*’, or ‘*stàngje*’ = ‘*sbarra*’), in which a cortège of young people of the village sets up a customhouse, through which the newly wedded spouses can pass only after paying a toll in kind or in cash (see Starec 2003: 17f.). Another example is the Tuscan ‘scampanata’, during which the people of the village, by means of cowbells and other instruments, ‘harass’ a newly married widower or a newly married widow on the wedding night, until they receive donations of food and drink (see Gabrieli 1931).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. §1.1.2.iii and §1.2.3.

<sup>25</sup> With regard to *PMG* 848, see §2.1. As for *PMG* 882, cf. *Carm. pop.* 36 Neri = 882 Campbell = *PMG* 882 = 19 Edmonds = 38 Diehl = 23 Smyth = 42 Bergk<sup>3,4</sup> = 30 Bergk<sup>2</sup> = 18 Bergk<sup>1</sup> = 33 Schneidewin.

<sup>26</sup> With regard to the Samian *eiresione*, see *Carm. pop.* 18 Edmonds = 1 Diehl. As for the Attic *eiresione*, see *Carm. pop.* 17 Edmonds = 2 Diehl.



who justified the exclusion of the Attic *eiresione* by referring to its metrical uniformity in hexameters, that is to say, the verse of epic poetry *par excellence*.<sup>27</sup> The same reason is likely to have been applied in the case of the hexameters of the Samian *eiresione*, whose non-folk status would be supported by the Homeric attribution. On the contrary, by following the interpretation of the hexameter as a ‘traditional’ metre,<sup>28</sup> Furley (1994: 16) has distinguished the literary *koronisma* (written in choliambics) from the sub-literary, folkloristic Samian *eiresione*, thereby implicitly corroborating the inclusion of Diehl and Edmonds.

Trying to pinpoint distinguishing markers between anonymous ‘folk’ songs and authorial ‘literary’ texts inevitably brings about these interpretative tensions and incongruities in the analysis of the begging-song tradition in ancient Greece. We should instead observe that all texts discussed above can be analysed from a common perspective if they are looked at as textualised songs. Starting from the analysis of *PMG* 848, compared to the other four texts related to the ritual *quête* (the *koronisma*, the Samian and Attic *eiresionai*, and *PMG* 882), I shall explore to what extent the begging-song genre as a whole was included in the process of textualisation which saw the transition from ‘song’ to ‘poem’ (cf. §1.2.1.i). I shall show that, in this case, anonymity is compensated by other forms of literary attribution. The crucial point is no longer to identify what makes *PMG* 848 authentically ‘folk’ as opposed to more ‘literary’ versions of begging songs. Rather, I intend to illustrate that even an anonymous song such as *PMG* 848, once integrated into a literate discourse, was available to be read and discussed from literary perspectives, wherein a primary focus can lie on its intrinsic formal properties and on its contexts of origin and composition. At the same time, this view is not meant to deny the folkloric character of *PMG* 848. Begging songs such as the *chelidonisma* can still be fully considered folk songs, if analysed in their typical contexts of performance and function concerning the ritual *quête*. Only by adopting a definition of folksong which is based not on preconceived formal criteria but on specific modes of reception and perception can the concepts of ‘folk’ and ‘literature’ coexist in a single common typology of textual analysis.

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<sup>27</sup> ‘Porro omnia, quae heroicis versibus composita sunt, procul habui. Seiungenda igitur cantilena notissima Εἰρεσιώνη’ (Bergk 1882: 681).

<sup>28</sup> Cf. West 1982: 35 (‘the hexameter established itself at an early date as the metre of epic and wisdom poetry; it was also used for short items such as oracles and riddles, and down to the mid six-century it is the usual metre for verse inscriptions’).

## 2.1 PMG 848: between folklore and literature

EDD Ath. 8.360b-d. *Carm. pop.* 2 Neri = 848 Campbell = PMG 848 = 20 Edmonds = 32 Diehl = 22 Smyth = 41 Bergk<sup>3,4</sup> = 29 Bergk<sup>2</sup> = 17 Bergk<sup>1</sup> = 32 Schneidewin.

FONT (I) Ath. 8.360b-d καὶ χελιδονίζειν δὲ καλεῖται παρὰ Ῥοδίοις ἀγερμός τις ἄλλος, περὶ οὗ φησι Θεόγνις ἐν β *Περὶ τῶν ἐν Ῥόδῳ θυσιῶν* (Thgn. Hist. *FGrH* 526 F 1) γράφων οὕτως· ‘εἶδος δέ τι τοῦ ἀγείρειν χελιδονίζειν Ῥόδιοι καλοῦσιν, ὃ γίνεται τῷ Βοηδρομιῶνι μηνί. χελιδονίζειν δὲ λέγεται διὰ τὸ εἰωθὸς ἐπιφωνεῖσθαι· [PMG 848]. τὸν δὲ ἀγερμὸν τοῦτον κατέδειξε πρῶτος Κλεόβουλος ὁ Λίνδιος ἐν Λίνδῳ χρείας γενομένης συλλογῆς χρημάτων’ || (II) Eust. *Od.* 1914.45-53 St. χελιδονίζειν παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις (desid. Ῥοδίοις) ἦν ἀγερμός γινόμενος Βοηδρομιῶνι μηνί, καλούμενος οὕτω διὰ τὸ εἰωθὸς τηνικαῦτα ἐπιφωνεῖσθαι· [PMG 848.1-5]. εἴτα, ὡς ἐν συνόψει φάναι, ‘οὐ παλάθαν ζητοῦμεν οἴνου τε δέπαστρον, ἃ χελιδῶν, καὶ λεκιθίταν-καθημέραν’, μετὰ δὲ ὀλίγα τελειοῦται ἡ ᾠδὴ εἰς τὸ [PMG 848.19f.]. καὶ οὗτοι μὲν πάντως χελιδονισταί. ἄλλοι δὲ τινες ἐκαλοῦντο κορωνισταί, οἷα τῇ κορώνῃ τῷ ζῳφ’ ἀγείροντες καὶ τὰ ὑπ’ αὐτῶν ᾄδόμενα κορωνίσματα ἐλέγοντο· ὧν καὶ ἐκτίθεται τινα ὁ δειπνοσοφιστής. ἰστέον δὲ ὅτι ἐν τοῖς εἰρημένοις ‘παλάθῃ’ μὲν συκῶν ἐπισύνθεσις· ‘δέπαστρον’ δὲ καὶ παρὰ Λυκόφρονι τὸ δέπας, οὗ δεπάστρεον παράγωγον τὸ ἐκ ποτηρίου πόμα· ‘λεκιθίτης’ δὲ πλακοῦς, ᾧ παραμέμικται καὶ ὠοῦ λέκιθος. τὸ δὲ ‘εἰ μὲν τι δώσεις, εἰ δὲ μή, οὐκ ἐάσομεν’ ἑλλειπτικῶς ἔχει· ἔστι δὲ καὶ παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν.

(⊗) ἦλθ’, ἦλθε χελιδῶν

καλὰς ὥρας ἄγουσα,

καὶ καλοὺς ἐνιαυτούς,

ἐπὶ γαστέρα λευκά,

κάπὶ νῶτα μέλαινα.

5

παλάθαν οὐ προκυκλεῖς

ἐκ πίονος οἴκου

οἴνου τε δέπαστρον

τυρῶ τε κάνυστρον;

† καὶ πυρῶνα † χελιδῶν

10

καὶ λεκιθίταν

οὐκ ἀπωθεῖται.

πότερ’ ἀπίωμες ἢ λαβώμεθα;

εἰ μὲν τι δώσεις· εἰ δὲ μή, οὐκ ἐάσομεν·

ἢ τὰν θύραν φέρωμες ἢ τὸ ὑπέρθυρον

15

ἢ τὰν γυναῖκα τὰν ἔσω καθημέραν·

μικρὰ μὲν ἐστὶ, ῥαδίως μιν οἴσομεν.

ἂν δὴ φέρῃς τι, μέγα δὴ τι φέροις.

ἄνοιγ’ ἄνοιγε τὰν θύραν χελιδόνι·

οὐ γὰρ γέροντές ἐσμεν, ἀλλὰ παῖδιά. (⊗)

Numeri: ll. 1, 4, 7-9 reiziana (rei: x-υ-υ-υ||); ll. 2, 3, 5 pherecrateans (pher: x-x-υ-υ-υ||); l. 6 acephalic choriambic dimeter (^2cho<sup>B</sup>: x-x-υ-υ-||); l. 10 corrupt (reizianum or pherecratean?); l. 11 adonean (ad: -υ-υ-υ||); l. 12 hypodochmium (hδ: -υ-υ-υ-υ||); l. 13 acephalic reizianum (or adonean) + hypodochmium (^rei hδ: υ-υ-υ-υ-||-υ-υ-υ-υ||); ll. 14-17, 19f. iambic trimeters (3ia: x-υ-x-υ-υ-υ-υ-υ-υ-υ-υ-υ-υ||); l. 18 iambic metron + acephalic choriambic dimeter (ia ^2cho<sup>B</sup>: υ-υ-υ-υ-||x-x-υ-υ-||).

Codd.: ACE (I) – M (II).

|| 1 ἦνθ' ἦνθε Hermann<sup>2</sup> || 2 ὦρας Ilgen || 3 καὶ καλοὺς I, II : καὶ post Hermann<sup>2</sup> del. edd. pl. (καλοὺς <τ'> Crusius, prob. Wilamowitz<sup>2</sup>) || 5 κἀπὶ I(A) : ἐπὶ I(CE), II, post Hermann<sup>2</sup> edd. pl. : κ' ἐπὶ Ahrens : πὶ Usener : κῆπὶ Wilamowitz<sup>1</sup> | μέλανα I(A) : -vna Usener || 6 οὐ προκυκλεῖς I : σὺ προκύκλει post Hermann<sup>2</sup> edd. pl. (τὸ Morelli, iam προκύκλει Casaubon) : σὺ προκυκλεῖν Usener (οὖν Ilgen, iam προκυκλεῖν Casaubon) : alia alii || 7 (παλάθαν-) οἴκου; dist. Ahrens | οἴκω Edmonds || 8 οἶνω Edmonds || 9 τυρῶ I(A) : -ροῦ I(CE), edd. pl. : -ρῶν I(B) | κἀνυστρον I(CE) : κανν- I(A) || 10 καὶ τυρῶνα I(A), Martín Vázquez (iam καὶ delete Hermann<sup>2</sup>) : καὶ τυρῶν ἅ I(CE), Palumbo Stracca (τυρῶν fort. emendatam lectionem pro τυρῶ cens. Kaibel) : τυρῶν τε vel καὶ τυρὰ dub. Hermann<sup>2</sup> : (τυρῶν τ. κ.) κατυρῶν ἅ Ahrens : καὶ πύρνα Bergk (iam πύρνων Ilgen), recc. Page, Campbell, De Stefani, Neri, Olson, Budelmann: κατυρῶνα dub. Bergk<sup>2,3,4</sup>, rec. Edmonds: καὶ πύρωνα Wilamowitz<sup>1</sup>, recc. Diehl, Gulick, prob. Pordomingo : στυρῶν δὲ Morelli | (παλάθαν-) καὶ τυρῶν; dist. Hermann<sup>1</sup> (praeceuntibus edd. prior.) || 11 κ. <τὸν> λ. Hermann<sup>2</sup> : κ. <δὴ> λ. Ahrens : κ' ἄρτον> λ. dub. Meineke | λεκιθιτῶν Palumbo Stracca || 12 ἀπωθεῖται I(AE), II : ἀπο- I(C) : ὠθεῖται Edmonds || 13 <κενοῖ> π. ἅ. Ahrens : πότερ<α πάλιν> ἅ. vel πότερ<α κενοῖ> ἴπωμα dub. Meineke | ἀπίωμα I(A) : -μεν I(CE), II | ἦ <τί σου> λ. Edmonds || 14 αἱ (bis) Edmonds | ἐάσωμες Schweighäuser, rec. Palumbo Stracca : ἐασοῦμες Morelli || 15 φέρωμες I(A) : -ομεν I(CE), II | τὸ ὑπέρθυρον I, II : θύπ- Dindorf : θοῦπ- Ahrens || 16 τὰν ἔ. I : κὰν ἔ. II | (ἦ τ. θ. ... ἦ τ. γ.-) καθημέναν; dist. Martín Vázquez || 17 μέν I : γάρ dub. Bergk<sup>2,3,4</sup> | μιν I : viv Meineke, rec. Palumbo Stracca | οἴσωμεν I(AE) : -μαι I(C) : -μες Schweighäuser, rec. Palumbo Stracca : οἰσοῦμες Morelli || 18 varie temptatum | φέρης τι I(A) : -ροις τι I(CE) : τι -ρης dub. traiec. Page | φέροις I : -οιο Bergk<sup>2,3,4</sup> || 20 post 17 dub. traiec. De Stefani | εἰμες Edmonds : ἐσ- Morelli.

Cf. Hsch. χ 324 Cunn. χελιδονισταί· οἱ δὲ τῇ χελιδόνι ἀγείροντες.

Here, here is the swallow!

She brings good seasons

and good years:

white on her belly,

black on her back.

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Won't you wheel out a dried fig cake

from your wealthy house?

And a cup of wine?

And a basket of cheese?

The swallow doesn't spurn 10  
a wheat-bread (?)<sup>29</sup>  
or a pancake either.  
Do we get something, or do we take it?  
If you give anything, you save something. If you don't, we won't let go.  
We'll take your door, your lintel 15  
or your wife sitting inside:  
she's small indeed, an easy load.  
If you bring anything, something big should it be.  
Open up, open your door to the swallow:  
We are children, not old men.

This *chelidonisma* (PMG 848) is widely considered to be one of the most representative samples of the ancient Greek folksong tradition.<sup>30</sup> One major issue of analysis concerns the reasons behind such a consideration; reasons that are based on both preconceived contexts of origin and production and predetermined criteria of sophistication. On the contrary, I argue that one should adopt a conceptualisation of folksong based on criteria of reception and perception for two reasons. First, this defines more appropriately what PMG 848 represented in its standard contexts of performance involving the ritual *quête*. Second, this would not preclude an interpretation of the same text from a literary perspective, namely one which is more interested in intrinsic formal properties and in contexts of origin and production. This literary perspective accounts for the inclusion of PMG 848 in the process of textualisation carried out by ancient scholarship. My conceptualisation, therefore, does not imply that the notions of folksong and literature are mutually exclusive: it rather reveals that such categories depend on the different contexts of reception and analysis in which the various texts can be used and discussed. I shall open the discussion by describing in what sense PMG 848 can be considered a folk song if we look only at the modes of reception and perception during its performative context. After this, a metrical, linguistic and stylistic analysis of the text will confirm that there are no specific internal criteria in which the label of folksong can be grounded in this example. Finally, comparison with the other four *quête*-related texts (the *koronisma*, the Samian and Attic

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<sup>29</sup> On the reading καὶ πυρῶνα, cf. *infra* n. 60.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. e.g. Morelli 1963: 121 ('Il più celebre tra i *Carmina popularia* della Grecia arcaica è senza dubbio il *chelidonisma* dei fanciulli di Rodi'); Martín Vázquez 1999: 23 ('The Song of the Swallow is, without a doubt, one of the most beautiful examples of the old popular Greek lyric').

*eiresionai*, and *PMG* 882) will clarify that the begging-song genre as a whole had become part of an ancient textualised tradition, within which even folk songs such as *PMG* 848 could be read and studied from a literary perspective.

The *chelidonisma* transmitted to us represents a textualised version of a song that – as mentioned above (§2.0) – was performed every year by children on the island of Rhodes to celebrate the return of spring, as announced by the arrival of the swallow. The song would accompany the ritual of the *quête*: according to the ancient sources, the tyrant Cleobulus first introduced this practice in Lindos as part of a (daring) economic policy.<sup>31</sup> Such an anecdote, albeit indirectly, stresses both the functionality and the traditionality of *PMG* 848. Modern scholars have not failed to notice these two aspects, which have however been related to a conceptualisation of folksong which is still based on preconceived criteria of origin and composition. On this conventional view, the functionality of *PMG* 848 would result in a pre-determined (lowbrow) style of composition.<sup>32</sup> On the other side, the traditionality of *PMG* 848 is generally understood in terms of its great antiquity and unchanging form. The anecdotal information about Cleobulus would tell us that Athenaeus' version reproduces the *chelidonisma* as it was really composed and diffused in Rhodes throughout the seventh/sixth century BC.<sup>33</sup> In my opinion, functionality and traditionality – along with other aspects, such as anonymity – need to be taken into account in the analysis of the *chelidonisma* as a folk song, but from different perspectives, which ought to highlight the contexts of performance and reception.

First of all, *PMG* 848 can be considered a folk song not because it is a purely practical song devoid of aesthetic or other content, but because it was used and perceived mainly from a functionalist standpoint (§1.3.2) in its typical performative context involving the ritual *quête*.

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<sup>31</sup> Ath. 8.360d τὸν δὲ ἀγεμὸν τοῦτον κατέδειξε πρῶτος Κλεόβουλος ὁ Λίνδιος ἐν Λίνδῳ χρείας γενομένης συλλογῆς χρημάτων. Cleobulus was one of the Seven Sages and tyrant of Lindos for forty years. His *akmé* dates from 628-625 BC (see Marchiori 2001: 897f. n. 5).

<sup>32</sup> Cf. e.g. Martín Vázquez 1999: 38f. ('To sum up, the Song of the Swallow has all the traditional constituents of a folksong, such as repetition, ambiguity, dramatization and above all a practical function'). After mentioning the anecdote about Cleobulus, Yatromanolakis (2009: 268f.) points out that the functionalist approach to folksong brings about interpretations based on biased and pre-constituted criteria of sophistication ('The kind of functionalism reflected in our sources has contributed to an explicitly or implicitly consensus among classicists, namely that because these songs [*scil.* the *carmina popularia*] were composed only for a specific use, they are simpler in structure and are consequently characterised by no intricate aesthetics', at p. 268). My notion of folksong too is based on a functionalist approach, but from an altogether different perspective from Yatromanolakis, which takes into consideration specific modalities of use and reception (cf. *infra*).

<sup>33</sup> See e.g. the linguistic interpretations of Morelli (1963) and Martín Vázquez (1999) discussed below.

In this sense, *PMG* 848 was not looked at by its users in ancient Rhodes as an artistic product in its own right. Their focus was not on the aesthetics of *PMG* 848, nor on the quality of its performance. From a functionalist viewpoint, *PMG* 848 was mainly considered for what it represented for its own (child-)performers and audiences – in other words, for the local society within which it was performed. This functional-occasional perspective relates closely to two other fundamental aspects that identify the folksong, namely traditionality and anonymity. First, the functionalist perspective is more likely to prevail in synchronic reperformances, meaning that folk songs are constantly reperformed in a recurrent event, such as the return of spring in the case of *PMG* 848. Only in this sense – as part of an annual tradition – and not in the sense of ‘old-fashioned’ or ‘primitive’ – can the *chelidonisma* be considered a ‘traditional’ folk song. Therefore, the information about Cleobulus as the inventor of the ritual *quête* in Lindos cannot be read as secure evidence of the antiquity of *PMG* 848. Taken at face value, such an anecdote is to be interpreted as an ‘invented tradition’, i.e. that constructed and formally instituted process through which a society acknowledges the symbolic and cultural value of their routine performances: in this case the performance of the swallow song in spring (§1.3.3). Second, folk songs – understood as songs which are mainly perceived from a functional-occasional perspective and performed in synchronic reperformances – can also be considered ‘anonymous’ because, in their contexts of performance, the authorising identity of their composers and/or performers is not essential for the purposes of the performance itself. In Foucauldian terms, the ‘author-function’ of folk songs is non-operative (§1.3.4). As for *PMG* 848, the lack of an authorial marker in its transmission points to the fact that it was not important to remember the name of the author because their identity was not relevant during the actual performance. The *chelidonisma* is not so much anonymous in absolute terms, but rather was *perceived* to be anonymously produced. Moreover, the identity of the performers is equally irrelevant: the Rhodian children (cf. l. 20) symbolically represent all children (past, present and future) who follow one another in the traditional performance of the *chelidonisma*. In this sense, *PMG* 848 belonged not to a single author/performer, but to the Rhodian community that every year attended and shared this performance.

We have just seen that *PMG* 848 can be considered a folk song on the basis of specific modalities of perception and reception in its determined performative context (involving the collection of gifts). In this case, *PMG* 848 was mostly used and perceived by reference to its function within the ritual *quête* it would accompany. Let us now explore a different scenario, in which the *chelidonisma* is considered outside its usual performative context, and instead within a literate discourse as a textualised song. In this other case, *PMG* 848 was available to

be read and analysed from a literary perspective, with a primary focus on its intrinsic formal properties and on its contexts of origin and composition. The textual analysis of *PMG* 848 will first confirm that no metrical, linguistic and stylistic elements are to be found that can define the text as ‘folk’. More specifically, the comparison, in terms of style and structure, with Phoenix’s *koronisma* and with the pseudo-Homeric *eiresione* will reveal the interest of ancient scholarship in the distinguishing structure and especially in the most peculiar traits that define the begging song not as a folkloric genre, but (more objectively) as a song genre which is also textualised by means of works that are more conscious of their own literariness – due to the validity of their ‘author-function’. Finally, I shall show to what extent the interest in contexts of origin and production is expressed within the literary discourse of antiquity for textualised begging songs such as *PMG* 848, the Attic *eiresione* and *PMG* 882.

To begin with, scholars have long argued about the metrical scheme of the *chelidonisma*. *PMG* 848 features a juxtaposition between Aeolic-choriambic (ll. 1-13) and iambic (ll. 14-20) rhythms.<sup>34</sup> The real controversy concerns the first ten lines of the poem: some scholars (including me) accept the presence of varied Aeolic cola, whereas others regularise the text as a uniform series of ten reiziana.<sup>35</sup> There is no need to find absolute metrical uniformity at all costs. Most importantly, even with its variation, the metrical scheme of *PMG* 848 does not point to a predetermined folkloric style.<sup>36</sup> While its Aeolic-choriambic sequences, though lacking a definite strophic structure, may vaguely recall the rhythms of Greek lyric poetry as a whole, the association of Aeolic-choriambic cola with iambs may also be found in the lyric parts of tragedy.<sup>37</sup> More effectively, this alternation seems to indicate a specific mode of execution: the first part of the composition (ll. 1-13) was likely to be sung, while the second one (ll. 14-20) was presumably performed in recitation.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> The dissenting opinions on this question are those of Hermann (1796: 337), Ilgen (1797: 164f. n. 50), and West (*GM* 147), who regard the poem as a succession of ionics *a maiore* (Hermann and Ilgen) or *a minore* (West).

<sup>35</sup> On the question as a whole, cf. Magnani 2013a: 549f.; Palumbo Stracca 2014: 62-65 (with her own metrical interpretation); Budelmann 2018: 257f.

<sup>36</sup> For example, defining the metre of *PMG* 848 as ‘volkmässig dorisch’ (Leo 1885: 194) reflects a Romantic view of the concept of folksong, based on preconceived criteria of origin and composition. According to these criteria, *PMG* 848 as a *carmen popolare* must necessarily feature a ‘folkloric’ style with a ‘folkloric’ metrical shape.

<sup>37</sup> See e.g. Martinelli 1995: 195-200; Cerbo 2008.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Palumbo Stracca (2014: 74f.), who also argues that the song is entirely performed by the beggars, perhaps with the accompaniment of the aulos. See also Adrados 1974 (also Adrados 2007: 80-82), who considers

As well as noting that a metrical uniformity is not imperative for a coherent interpretation of *PMG* 848, it is pointless (and unfeasible) to try and obtain the original linguistic form of the text, assuming that the composition of *PMG* 848 belongs to an archaic stage of the Doric dialect spoken in Rhodes. This reconstructive exercise is attempted, for example, in the interpretations of Morelli (1963)<sup>39</sup> and Martín Vázquez (1999). Both scholars have regarded the aforementioned anecdote about Cleobulus as the inventor of the ritual begging as a reliable piece of information, and accordingly they have tried to analyse and reconstruct the text as dependent on a more systematic Doric shape (*Doris severior* and *Doris media* respectively).<sup>40</sup> In the opinions of Morelli and Martín Vázquez respectively, Athenaeus would have transmitted the original Rhodian version of the *chelidonisma*, dating from the seventh or sixth century BC:<sup>41</sup> a text that would have then undergone considerable linguistic transformation since the first phases of the manuscript tradition. Certainly, one cannot deny that linguistic adaptations may have taken place throughout the textual transmission.<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless, the linguistic interpretations that rely on a reconstructed original Doric dialect of the text seem to me to presume far too much, especially because the reconstructions cannot be supported by concrete evidence.<sup>43</sup> To my mind, a conservative approach should be adopted when constituting the text of *PMG* 848. The aim should not be to restore a hypothetical *chelidonisma* sung by

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the *chelidonisma*'s text to be divided into parts: the former is choral (ll. 1-11), in which the greetings are addressed to the returning swallow (understood as a deity) and the request of gifts is made; the latter is monodic (ll. 12-20), being a sort of *paraklausithyron* in which the *exarchon* asks the landlady to renew the *ἱερὸς γάμος* with the deity. On this unconvincing 'erotic' interpretation, see the doubts expressed by Lambin 1992: 364f.

<sup>39</sup> Partly shared by Pordomingo 1996: 465f.

<sup>40</sup> For example, the following emendations of Schweighäuser 1803: 328f. (ἑάσομεν and οἴσομεν in ll. 14 and 17), Hermann 1816: 461 (ἦνθε ἦνθε in l. 1), Meineke 1858: 154 (vv in l. 17), Wilamowitz 1916: 58 (κῆπῖ in l. 5) and Edmonds 1940: 526f. (οἶκω and οἶνω in ll. 7 and 8; two αἱ in l. 14; εἶμεν in l. 20), are accepted and/or integrated with further suggestions by Morelli 1963: 151 (τὸ in l. 6; στυρῶν in l. 10; ἑασοῦμεν and οἰσοῦμεν in ll. 14 and 17; εἶμεν in l. 20).

<sup>41</sup> More nuanced are the interpretations of Ahrens (1843: 479), who traces the *chelidonisma* back to the time 'qua genuina Rhodiorum Doris Atthide temperari coepta erat' (i.e. between the fifth and fourth century BC), and Page (1962: 451, 'est chelidonismi forma recentior: vetustiore Rhodiorum dialectum aliquatenus restituere possis'). Adrados (1974: 64) too does not exclude an earlier dating, provided it is not beyond the seventh century BC.

<sup>42</sup> For instance, the Epitome (CE) – from which Eustathius' paraphrase also derives – retains on the one hand the female forms in -ᾱ(-), while on the other hand it Atticises the more strictly Doric forms of the Marcianus (A): τυρῶ is replaced by τυροῦ (l. 9), ἀπίωμεν and φέρωμεν are replaced by ἀπίωμεν and φέρομεν (ll. 13 and 15).

<sup>43</sup> Cf. also Magnani 2013: 52 n. 41 and 2013a: 555-558.



children of Rhodes around the end of the seventh century BC, but more realistically, to edit the song that Athenaeus and his source(s) knew.

Adhering to such guidelines results in a text featuring a composite language, in which alternative forms of different dialect origin co-exist side-by-side. Such a composite dialectal presence recalls the mixed poetic language adopted by Hellenistic authors such as Callimachus and Theocritus. We can observe in *PMG* 848 the Doric retention of  $\bar{\alpha}(-)$  (cf. ll. 4, 6, 15, 16, 19) along with the presence of the Ionism  $\mu\upsilon\nu$  (l. 17), the Doric verbal endings in  $-\mu\epsilon\varsigma$  (ll. 13 and 15) besides the respective Ionic-Attic forms (in ll. 14, 17 and 20), as well as an occurrence of singular genitive in  $-\omega$  – typical form of *Doris severior* – in  $\tau\upsilon\rho\tilde{\omega}$  (l. 9).<sup>44</sup>

The harmonious mixture of Dorisms, Ionisms and Ionic-Attic forms undoubtedly recalls the *Kunstsprache* found in Callimachus and Theocritus.<sup>45</sup> Yet, it remains difficult to determine to what extent the textualised version of *PMG* 848 differs from the song that was actually performed by the Rhodian children. To what degree the text was modified and readapted – whether the original version was adapted according to the *Kunstsprache* of the Hellenistic poets, or whether, instead, the *chelidonisma* itself represented a source of inspiration for literary poetry<sup>46</sup> – are questions that cannot be answered with certainty. More cogently, it can be argued that the first textualised version of *PMG* 848 might date back to the Hellenistic age and be attributed to Theognis of Rhodes (the source mentioned by Athenaeus).<sup>47</sup> This view is in line with what has been said in the first chapter about the process of textualisation (§1.2.1.i). The transition from ‘song’ to ‘poem’ had a profound impact on the local song-making traditions described by antiquarians and local historiographers of the Hellenistic period. *PMG* 848, as a textualised song included in Theognis’ work  $\Pi\epsilon\rho\iota\ \tau\tilde{\omega}\nu\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \text{’}\rho\acute{o}\delta\omicron\varsigma\ \theta\upsilon\sigma\iota\tilde{\omega}\nu$ , may thus represent a

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<sup>44</sup> Martín Vázquez (1999: 31) regards  $\tau\upsilon\rho\tilde{\omega}$  (transmitted by **A**) as a certainly corrupted reading and opts for  $\tau\upsilon\rho\tilde{\omega}\nu$  (found in **B**), without excluding  $\tau\upsilon\rho\omicron\tilde{\omega}$  (transmitted by **C** and **E**). In my opinion, it is more appropriate to accept  $\tau\upsilon\rho\tilde{\omega}$  of the Marcianus and regard  $\tau\upsilon\rho\omicron\tilde{\omega}$  as the superficial Atticising that occurs elsewhere in the manuscripts of the Epitome (cf. *supra* n. 42). The reading  $\tau\upsilon\rho\tilde{\omega}\nu$  of B is presumably an easy conjecture of the Renaissance.

<sup>45</sup> Even in the literary Doric of both Callimachus (cf. especially *Hymns* 5 and 6) and Theocritus, we find e.g. the alternation between  $\mu\upsilon\nu$  (Ionic) and  $\nu\upsilon\nu$  (Doric), first plural persons in  $-\mu\epsilon\varsigma$ , singular genitives in  $-\omega$ . On Callimachus’ language, see Hollis 2009: 10-15; Parsons 2011; Vessella 2016. On Theocritus’ language, see Hunter 1996: 28-45; Hunter 1999: 21-26; Vessella 2016a.

<sup>46</sup> In other words, did *PMG* 848 originally contain a mix of dialects that also influenced the play of languages in Hellenistic poetry? Such a hypothesis poses another question: Why would a local song show this dialectal mixing? Can it be supposed that the melting pot of Hellenistic colonies produces this play with languages?

<sup>47</sup> Cf. *supra* n. 6.

clear example of this heritage of local songs which were recorded and set down in writing during the Hellenistic age.

A further implication of the process of textualisation is the strong interest in the intrinsic formal properties of the song-texts. As a textualised song, *PMG* 848 was examined in antiquity as a product of art in its own right and with its own set of aesthetic expectations. Such a focal point is reflected in the appropriation, by both Phoenix's *koronisma* and the pseudo-Homeric *eiresione*, of the same structure and stylistic traits as the ones which are found in the *chelidonisma*.<sup>48</sup> However, in modern scholarship, the stylistic analysis of *PMG* 848 is still subject to the interpretative tensions we have noted which seek to define the *chelidonisma* as a folk song with specifically 'folk' formal features. Therefore, the close affinities detected among the three texts in terms of style and structure have been commonly interpreted as the peculiar features that define, on the one hand, *PMG* 848 as a folk song, and on the other hand, the two authorial texts as folk-like compositions (or 'fakelore').<sup>49</sup> In my view, those common features can be read, in a more objective fashion, as the most representative traits of begging songs as a genre (not as a folk genre). Hence, the comparison of *PMG* 848 with Phoenix's *koronisma* and the pseudo-Homeric *eiresione* would indicate no more than the full textualisation of specific stylistic elements belonging to a specific song genre. Let us examine these traits by, first and foremost, presenting the texts of Phoenix's *koronisma* and of the Samian *eiresione* as well:

Phoen. fr. 2 D.<sup>3</sup>

ἐσθλοί, κορώνη χεῖρα πρόσδοτε κριθέων

τῇ παιδὶ τῷπόλλωνος, ἢ λέκος πυρῶν

ἢ ἄρτον ἢ ἡμαιθον ἢ ὅτι τις χρήζει·

δότ' ὦγαθοί, <τι> τῶν ἕκαστος ἐν χερσίν

ἔχει κορώνη· χᾶλα λήψεται χονδρόν·

5

φιλεῖ γὰρ αὕτη πάγχυ ταῦτα δαίνυσθαι.

ὁ νῦν ἄλας δοῦς αὖθι κηρίον δώσει.

ὦ παῖ, θύρην ἄγκλινε· Πλοῦτος ἔκρουσε,

καὶ τῇ κορώνη παρθένος φέροι σῦκα.

θεοί, γένοιτο πάντ' ἄμεμπτος ἡ κόρυς,

10

<sup>48</sup> On the one hand, the *koronisma* is a product of learned culture (as a text composed by Phoenix), on the other hand, the Samian *eiresione* had become part of it (through its incorporation in the para-literary *Vita* of Homer).

<sup>49</sup> On the concept of 'fakelore' see §1.1.1 n. 52.

κάφνειδὸν ἄνδρα κώνομαστὸν ἐξεύροι,  
καὶ τῷ γέροντι πατρὶ κοῦρον εἰς χεῖρας  
καὶ μητρὶ κούρην εἰς τὰ γούνα κατθείη,  
θάλος τρέφειν γυναῖκα τοῖς κασιγνήτοις.  
ἐγὼ δ' ὅκου πόδες φέρωσιν, †ὀφθαλμοὺς†  
ἀμείβομαι Μούσησι πρὸς θύρης ἄδων,  
καὶ δόντι καὶ μὴ δόντι πλεῦνα τῶν <Γύ>γεω.

15

καὶ ἐπὶ τέλει δὲ τοῦ ἱάμβου φησίν·

ἀλλ' ὦγαθοί, ἔπορεύεσθ' ὦν μυχὸς πλουτεῖ·  
δός, ὦ ἄναξ, δὸς καὶ σὺ πολλά μοι νύμφη·  
νόμος κορώνη χεῖρα δοῦν' ἐπαιτούση.  
τοσαῦτ' αἰεῖδω· δός τι καὶ καταχρήσει.<sup>50</sup>

20

Noble sirs, contribute a handful of barley to a crow,  
Apollo's child; or a dish of wheat,  
or a loaf of bread, or half an obol, or whatever you like!  
Gentlemen, give a bit of whatever each of you has in his hands  
to a crow! She'll also accept a lump of salt,  
for she's very fond of dining on this;  
whoever gives her salt now will give honeycomb some other time.  
Slave! Open the door: Wealth knocked!  
Let an unmarried girl bring figs for the crow!  
Gods, may this girl never be faulted for anything;  
may she find a rich husband with a good reputation,  
and set a boy in her old father's hands,  
and a girl on her mother's knees,

5

10

<sup>50</sup> Cf. also the recent editions, accompanied by a critical apparatus and commentary notes, by De Stefani (2000: 93-116) and Sider (2017: 514-518). The phrase ὅκου πόδες φέρωσιν ὀφθαλμούς (l. 15) makes no sense, while the simple ὅκου πόδες φέρωσιν offers a meaning appropriate to the context. Unless we posit a lacuna (as does Olson 2008: 146), we need to consider ὀφθαλμούς corrupted as well as being linked in enjambment to the following verse. Among others, there are three main possibilities (cf. De Stefani 2000: 110-112; Sider 2017: 517): (1) changing ὀφθαλμούς into an epithet of Μούσησι (e.g. ἀφθάρτοις); (2) changing ὀφθαλμούς into a vocative similar to ἐσθλοί at l. 1 (e.g. ἰφθίμοι); and (3) changing ὀφθαλμούς into an accusative governed by ἀμείβομαι (e.g. ἰφθίμους).

a child to raise to be a wife for her brothers!

But as for me, wherever my feet take me, †eyes† 15  
by singing at doors I offer the Muses in exchange  
whether or not a person gives me more than Gyges' fortune.

[And at the end of his iambic poem he says:]

But, good sirs, offer me some of the wealth your house has deep within.  
Give me something, lord! And you too, young lady, give plentifully to me!  
The law requires that you give a handful to a crow when she asks. 20  
That's the end of my song. Give something; it will be enough.<sup>51</sup>

[Hom.] *Ep.* 14 Markwald

δῶμα προσετραπόμεσθ' ἀνδρὸς μέγα δυναμένοιο,  
ὃς μέγα μὲν δύναται, μέγα δὲ βρέμει, ὄλβιος αἰεὶ.  
αὐταὶ ἀνακλίνεσθε θύραι· Πλοῦτος γὰρ ἔσεισι  
πολλός, σὺν Πλούτῳ δὲ καὶ Εὐφροσύνη τεθαλυῖα,  
Εἰρήνη τ' ἀγαθή. ὅσα δ' ἄγγεα, μεστὰ μὲν εἶη, 5  
κυρβα(σ)ίη δ' αἰεὶ μάζης κατὰ καρδόπου ἔρποι.  
νῦν μὲν κριθαίην εὐώπιδα σησαμόεσσαν  
( \* \* \* )

τοῦ παιδὸς δὲ γυνὴ κατὰ διφράδα βήσεται ὕμνιν,  
ἡμίονοι δ' ἄξουσι κραταίποδες ἐς τόδε δῶμα,  
αὐτὴ δ' ἰστὸν ὑφαίνοι ἐπ' ἡλέκτρῳ βεβαυῖα. 10  
νεῦμαί τοι νεῦμαι ἐνιαύσιος ὥστε χελιδόν'  
ἔστηκ' ἐν προθύροις ψιλὴ πόδας· ἀλλὰ φέρ' αἶψα.  
(ὕ)πέρ σε τῷ πόλλωνος, (ῶ) γύ(ν)αι τι δός.  
κεῖ μὲν τι δώσεις· εἰ δὲ μή, οὐχ ἐστήξομεν,  
οὐ γὰρ συνοικήσοντες ἐνθάδ' ἤλθομεν. 15

We take recourse to the house of a man of great means,  
who has great resources and makes a great noise, ever prosperous.  
Open of your own accord, doors, for Wealth will enter  
in plenty, and with Wealth, flourishing Cheer

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<sup>51</sup> Transl. Olson 2008: 145, 147 (adapted).

and welcome Peace. May the grain jars all be full, 5  
 and the mound of dough ever top the kneading trough.  
 Now [give us] beautiful barley meal laced with sesame  
 [...]  
 Your son's bride will come to you in a car,  
 hard-hoofed mules will bring her to this house:  
 as she weaves at her loom may she stand on a floor of electrum. 10  
 I'll return, I'll return each year, like the swallow.  
 I stand at the porch, feet stripped, so bring something quickly.  
 For Apollo's sake, lady, give us something!  
 If you will, well and good: if not, we won't wait about,  
 we didn't come here to make our homes with you.<sup>52</sup> 15

*PMG* 848 and the two texts quoted above reveal a similar structure characterized by recurring themes and expressions that can be summarised by the following notes:

- The *captatio benevolentiae* addressed to the landlords who are being visited. The opening words of the Samian *eiresione* (ll. 1f.) flatter the prospective landlord by remarking on his powerfulness and his wealth. In the *koronisma*, flattering addresses of the landlords occur in ll. 1 (ἐσθλοί 'noble sirs'), 4 (ῥῆγαθοί 'gentlemen'), 19 (ἄναξ 'lord'), whereas in l. 18 (ἀλλ' ῥῆγαθοί, 'πορέξαθ' ὧν μυχὸς πλουτεῖ) the landlords are specifically praised for the prosperity of their own larders. Likewise, in *PMG* 848.6-9 (παλάθαν οὐ προκυκλεῖς / ἐκ πίονος οἴκου / οἴνου τε δέπαστρον / τυρῶ τε κάνυστρον;), the beggars make a rhetorical and polite request for gifts by admiring the abundance of the household provisions.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Transl. West 2003: 395, 397 (adapted).

<sup>53</sup> The παλάθη (l. 6) is a cake of dried figs. At the Athenian festival of the Plynteria, which was celebrated in the month of Thargelion (April-May), this food was carried in procession in honour of Athena Polias (Greselin 2001: 212 n. 1). The παλάθη was presumably a delicacy brought to the table during spring celebrations. The verb προκυκλέω (l. 6) is a *hapax legomenon* ('roll forth or out') and is used 'colloquially with reference to the abundance of dainties' (Smyth 1900: 509). The turning movement described by the verb can refer to the fact that 'presumably the παλάθα was round' (Campbell 1982: 447). To this extent, the hypothesis of Köster (1831: 74 n. 2) is interesting: according to him προκυκλεῖν means 'provertere, et proprie ad παλάθαν referendum est, quae facete ἐκ πίονος οἴκου tam magna fingitur, ut non sine magna difficultate provolvi queat, deinde per zeugma cum vocibus δέπαστρον et κάνυστρον coniungendum est'. As for ἐκ πίονος οἴκου (l. 7), cf. also *Od.* 9.35 πίονα οἶκον.

- Generic blessings and wishes for family prosperity. In the *chelidonisma*, the arrival of the swallow brings with it ‘good seasons’ and ‘good years’ (PMG 848.1-3 ἦλθ’, ἦλθε χελιδὼν / καλὰς ὥρας ἄγουσα, /καὶ καλοὺς ἐνιαυτούς). The use of the plural in καλὰς ὥρας and καλοὺς ἐνιαυτούς can be regarded as a ‘poetic exaggeration’ (Smyth 1900: 509),<sup>54</sup> or more cogently, can refer to ‘cyclical returns’. By (καλὰς) ὥρας the ‘(beautiful) springtime’ is meant, according to the absolute use of the term ὥρα (LSJ<sup>9</sup> s.v. (C) A.I.2).<sup>55</sup> In καλοὺς ἐνιαυτούς, the meaning of ‘auspicious anniversary’ is implied: see the original value of ἐνιαυτός (LSJ<sup>9</sup> s.v. A.1).<sup>56</sup> The *chelidonisma* celebrates an annual occurrence, a sort of New Year’s Day that, like all of its recurrences elsewhere, promises luck and prosperity to the entire community.<sup>57</sup> Interestingly, line 11 of the Samian *eiresione* recalls these verses while stressing its cyclical return: νεῦμαί τοι νεῦμαι ἐνιαύσιος ὥστε χελιδὼν. This similarity to the opening words of the *chelidonisma* is highlighted by the syntactic structure, with the analogous repetition of the main verbs (ἦλθε and νεῦμαί respectively). The *eiresione*, or more precisely its personified spirit,<sup>58</sup> will cyclically return just like the swallow in spring, and just like the arrival of the swallow, the arrival of the tree spirit represents a sort of New Year’s Day blessing. Moreover, not only in the Samian *eiresione* (ll. 8-10) but also in the *koronisma* (ll. 10-14), more

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<sup>54</sup> Cf. e.g. Eur. *Cyc.* 508 ἦρος ὥραις.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. *Mel. adesp.* 931L.12 Campbell ταῖσδ’ ἐν ὥραις. According to Rutherford (1995: 41), the mention of the nightingale shortly above (l. 8 ἀηδονίς) – another bird that in collective imagination is messenger of spring – suggests that it is springtime. In Greek literature, the canonical classification of the four seasons first occurs in Alcman. *PMGF* 20.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. also Smyth 1900: 509; Campbell 1982: 447.

<sup>57</sup> Some scholars (see Magnani 2013: 54f. with n. 45) suppose that, in the archaic calendar of Rhodes, the beginning of the ‘civil year’ coincided with the beginning of the agricultural year (i.e. springtime). Only between 172 BC and the first-second centuries AD was the beginning of the civil year moved from spring to autumn, both in Rhodes and in other areas of ancient Greece.

<sup>58</sup> In l. 11 of the Samian *eiresione*, we might be faced with the revelation of the *eiresione*, impersonated by a member of the performers, preferably a girl, dressed up with fronds, leaves and flowers in the shape of a tree. As in the *chelidonisma* and in the *koronisma*, where children could be disguised as swallows or crows respectively, so in the Samian *eiresione* one of the beggars could impersonate the sprig that – laden with fruits and gifts – was carried in procession. Likewise, the custom of choosing a king or queen of May, a spouse or a bride of May, which visually represents and above all embodies the spirit of the processional tree (May Pole), is found in the modern European traditions of the May Day: cf. e.g. the English ‘Jack-in-the-Green’ tradition.

specific blessings for the visited families are found: the beggars wish the landlord happy and prosperous marriages of his son and daughter respectively. In the same texts, generic blessing formulas for prosperity are also made through the *topos* of the god ἐποικίδιος: while the *koronisma* mentions Wealth knocking the door (l. 8), in the Samian *eiresione* Wealth, Merriment (one of the Graces) and Peace are ready to enter the house (ll. 3-59).<sup>59</sup>

- Analogous expressions are used by the beggars to induce people to open their front doors: see *PMG* 848.19 ἄνοιγ' ἄνοιγε τὰν θύραν χελιδόνι, *Phoen. fr.* 2.8 D.<sup>3</sup> ὦ παῖ, θύρην ἄγκλινε, [*Hom.*] *Ep.* 14.3 Markwald αὐταὶ ἀνακλίνεσθε θύραι.
- Demands for gifts are made in all three texts. Indeed a list of the desired gifts, mostly types of food and delicacies, appears both in the *chelidonisma* (*PMG* 848.6-12) and in the *koronisma* (ll. 1-7, 9). In *PMG* 848.10-12 (χελιδὼν / καὶ λεκιθίταν / οὐκ ἀπωθεῖται) and in l. 5 of the *koronisma* (χᾶλα λήψεται χονδρόν), both requests make use of irony in parallel ways: just as the swallow-beggars will (of course) not reject a delicacy such the λεκιθίτης,<sup>60</sup> the crow-beggars will even be willing to accept a tiny pinch of salt. In the Samian *eiresione*, there is no explicit request for food or

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<sup>59</sup> The *topos* of the god ἐποικίδιος is also found in *Hippon. fr.* 44,1f. Dg.<sup>2</sup> ἐμοὶ δὲ Πλοῦτος – ἔστι γὰρ λίην τυφλός – / ἐς τῷκί' ἐλθὼν οὐδ' ἄμ' εἶπεν κτλ., *Ar. Plut.* 230ff. σὺ δ', ὦ κράτιστε Πλοῦτε πάντων δαιμόνων, / εἴσω μετ' ἐμοῦ δεῦρ' εἴσιθ' κτλ., 790ff., *Plut. Quaest. conv.* VI 8, 693f ἔξω Βούλιμον, ἔσω δὲ Πλοῦτον καὶ Ὑγίαιαν.

<sup>60</sup> The λεκιθίτης (ἄρτος) is a type of 'bread "made of pulse"' (LSJ<sup>9</sup> s.v.), which is related to λέκιθος (ὄ), a term which indicates a 'purée of pulse' (cf. Greselin 2001: 294 n. 4). Eustathius mistakes this for the homonymous λέκιθος (ῆ), which means 'egg yolk', and therefore explains λεκιθίτης as πλακοῦς, ὃ παραμέμικται καὶ ὠοῦ λέκιθος. Casaubon (*ap.* Schweighäuser 1803: 660, 'λεκιθίτης πλακοῦς, ab ovorum vitellis immixtis dictus') and Zell (1826: 68), translating 'Eiersemmelchen', are misled by Eustathius. For a similar mistake, see also the adjective λεκιθώδης in *Phaen. fr.* 48 Wehrli (cf. Neri 1998: 129ff.). It is plausible that a rare food name had also occurred in l. 10, where the text of **A** is καὶ πυρῶνα, whereas **C** and **E** read καὶ πυρῶν ἅ. The reading of the Marcianus is meaningless, unless πυρῶνα indicates a food made of wheat (πυρός). On the other hand, the reading of the Epitome shows two major problems. The first is that the genitive should be related to λεκιθίταν of the following line and should form a concept that is not present in the *Realien*, since the wheat (πυρός) bread and the pulse bread (λεκιθίτης) were two distinct varieties of breads (see Marchiori 2001: 897 n. 2: cf. *Ath.* 3.111b, 114b, 114d-e). The second is the presence of the article, which does not seem to be justified as compared to the rest of the poem (cf. Morelli 1963: 144; Martín Vázquez 1999: 32). On the various solutions put forward for l. 10, see the apparatus.

money, but we can suppose a gap after line 7, where the children would finally formulate their demands.<sup>61</sup>

- Joking threats are delivered in the case of a refusal. The threatening tone is evident in *PMG* 848.13-18 and ll. 14f. of the Samian *eiresione*. In both texts, we are faced with a minatory παρακαταλογία, with a change of rhythm into the iambic trimeters (from Aeolic-choriambic cola and from hexameters respectively). In *PMG* 848.14 (εἰ μὲν τι δώσεις· εἰ δὲ μή, οὐκ ἐάσομεν) and l. 14 of the *eiresione* (εἰ μὲν τι δώσεις· εἰ δὲ μή, οὐχ ἐστήξομεν), the two expressions appear to be formulas which the children-beggars usually employ to ask for offers menacingly. The twofold ellipsis is noticed in both expressions: a lack of apodosis in the first conditional sentence and no verb in the protasis of the following conditional sentence.<sup>62</sup> The general meaning is: ‘If you give us something, that’s fine and we will go away; if you don’t, we won’t leave you in peace / we shall not stay (*scil.* and so, you will not get our blessing)’.<sup>63</sup> The same threatening tone can be found in the modern motto ‘Trick or Treat?’, chanted by children who call at houses to solicit gifts at Halloween (cf. §2.0; Campbell 1982: 446f.).

What do these affinities tell us about the relationship of the *chelidonisma* with the *koronisma* and the Samian *eiresione*? Modern scholarship has dealt with this question by recourse to the binary equation: ‘anonymous’ = ‘folk’ vs. ‘authorial’ = ‘literary’. While the traits described above have been regarded as authentically ‘folk’ in the case of the anonymous *chelidonisma*, the same traits have been interpreted as reminiscent of a ‘folksy’ style in the pseudo-Homeric *eiresione* – which is hardly ever included in the collection of the *carmina popularia* (cf. §2.0) – and, especially, in Phoenix’s *koronisma* (which has never been included

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<sup>61</sup> Cf. Wilamowitz 1916: 19; Wilamowitz 1916a: 433; Diehl 1925: 193; Edmonds 1940: 522; Cessi 1948: 295; Schönberger 1980: 20f.; Markwald 1986: 259-262; West 2003: 394.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Agamemnon’s speech in *Il.* 1.135f. ἀλλ’ εἰ μὲν δώσουσι γέρας μεγάθυμοι Ἀχαιοὶ / ἄρσαντες κατὰ θυμὸν ὅπως ἀντάξιον ἔσται: in this case too, the apodosis is implied but easily deducible.

<sup>63</sup> Imagining the actual performance of the song, Boegehold (2000: 10) argues that the children made gestures in order to complete the phrases: the first conditional sentence would have been completed ‘by means of the old and widely used sign made with right arm raised, thumb against forefinger, other fingers extended’. In his discussion, Boegehold described other potential types of acting out. For instance, the children would have cupped their hands in order to receive the begged gifts and their arms and hands would have fluttered accordingly in order to mimic the fluttering of swallow’s wings.



in that collection).<sup>64</sup> In turn, these ‘folksy’ traits have been contrasted with the higher literary register of the two authorial texts, as is located in the metre<sup>65</sup> and in other features such as the more complex syntax and elevated vocabulary.<sup>66</sup> Clearly, we are back with the categorical bifurcation between ‘(anonymous) folklore’ and ‘(authorial) literature’ based on criteria of sophistication. However, we have amply seen how simplicity (as opposed to sophistication) cannot be considered a coherent yardstick to define the folksong. More specifically, the metrical and linguistic analysis of *PMG* 848 has confirmed the impossibility of tracing an allegedly folk style for this text.<sup>67</sup> Once the conceptualisation that *a priori* considers *PMG* 848 as a folk song featuring well-defined folkloric traits has been discarded, the common elements detected above can be read as peculiar to begging songs as a song genre, not to begging songs as a folkloric genre. The comparison of *PMG* 848 with the *koronisma* and the Samian *eiresione* not only reveals the interest in antiquity in compositions belonging to everyday life, but it also reaffirms the broader scholarly interest in song-like compositions. Hence, the intrinsic formal properties of *PMG* 848 do not identify this text as a pure folk song as opposed to more literary adaptations. More simply, they connect the text with an authorial (or pseudo-authorial) production that is inspired by the begging-song genre as a whole. The appropriation, by texts such as Phoenix’s *koronisma* and the pseudo-Homeric *eiresione*, of traits typical of begging songs indirectly reflects the scholarly interest in the intrinsic formal properties of a song-text such as *PMG* 848. Therefore, the *chelidonisma*, Phoenix’s *koronisma* and the Samian *eiresione* can be analysed

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<sup>64</sup> Cf. e.g. Furley 1994: 17 (‘Phoenix takes care to make his poem “folksy”’); De Stefani 2000: 86f. (‘ma il *koronisma* di Fenice presenta un’elaborazione stilistica troppo superiore a quei testi anonimi, perché si possa parlare, per esso, di “poesia popolare”, ammesso che tale categoria romantica sia applicabile alla stessa *eiresione* e al *chelidonisma*’)

<sup>65</sup> Phoenix’s *koronisma* is in choliambics whereas the Samian *eiresione* is in hexameters (changing into iambic trimeters only in the closing verses). Conversely, the hexameter has also been read as a folkloric trait: this shows the incongruity we are faced with if we adopt preconceived formal criteria in the conceptualisation of folksong (cf. §2.0).

<sup>66</sup> See e.g. the ‘unnatural’ syntax and the Homeric terminology (θάλος [...] κασιγνήτοις) in Phoen. fr. 2.14 D.<sup>3</sup> (cf. Furley 1994: 12, 17; De Stefani 2000: 108-110). In the opening verses of the Samian *eiresione*, we can find two Homeric formulas: in l. 1 ἀνδρὸς μέγα δυναμένοιο (cf. *Od.* 1.276 ἄψ ἵτω ἐς μέγαρον πατρὸς μέγα δυναμένοιο, 11.414 οἳ ῥά τ’ ἐν ἀφνειοῦ ἀνδρὸς μέγα δυναμένοιο), and in l. 2 μέγα δὲ βρέμει (cf. e.g. *Il.* 4.425 μεγάλα βρέμει, 14.399 μέγα βρέμεται).

<sup>67</sup> As further proof of the difficulty in categorically distinguishing between ‘folk’ and ‘literary’, it is worth remembering that some expressions of *PMG* 848 (ἐκ πίονος οἴκου in l. 7 and the ellipsis in l. 14) may recall Homeric passages (cf. *supra* nn. 53 and 62).

from a common (literary) vantage-point as textualised songs, although they reached this condition in different ways and through different stages of their transmission.

The interpretative perspective that combines these texts as textualised songs – instead of sharply separating folk forms from literary ones – is evident in the ancient sources, where, for example, the *chelidonisma* and the *koronisma* are both presented and analysed on a same level in the same passage (Ath. 8.359e-360d). Here, *PMG* 848 and Phoenix's *koronisma* are not distinguished in contrasting terms (anonymous/authorial), but on the contrary, they are presented as two different but equally valid examples of begging songs.<sup>68</sup> It is unclear whether Athenaeus was the first author to compare the two texts or whether they were matched up by a common source which he retained.<sup>69</sup> In either case, this combination recalls the passage of Clearchus (fr. 33 Wehrli), in which the Peripatetic philosopher discusses the anonymous Locrian songs and the authorial poems of Sappho and Anacreon in the analogous terms of erotic songs (cf. §1.2.3). In the same way as Clearchus combines anonymous and authorial song-making traditions into one by studying them as textualised songs (namely as poems belonging to the same poetic genre), Athenaeus presents the anonymous *chelidonisma* and Phoenix's *koronisma* as two comparable examples of begging songs. As textualised songs, both the *chelidonisma* and *koronisma* are analysed in the *Deipnosophistae* from a single (literary)

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<sup>68</sup> Athenaeus' excursus moves from the quotation of a kind of crow in a Middle-Comedy fragment (Ephipp. fr. 15.12f. KA *ap.* Ath. 8.359d). The conversation is resumed by Plutarch of Alexandria, one of the *Deipnosophists*, who is not interested in providing an interpretation and/or a contextualisation of the comic fragment, but in elaborating a series of (creative) intertextual connections around the symbolic figure of the crow and other birds. This gives Plutarch the opportunity to turn to the two examples of begging songs related to the two specific kinds of birds (the crow and the swallow). On this excursus and on this 'creative intertextuality', see Paulas 2012: 428-434.

<sup>69</sup> This common source has been identified by Morelli (1963: 126-134) as being Pamphilus of Alexandria. Cf. Ath. 8.360b κορωνισταὶ δὲ ἐκαλοῦντο οἱ τῇ κορώνῃ γείροντες, ὥς φησι Πάμφιλος ὁ Ἀλεξανδρεὺς ἐν τοῖς Περὶ Ὀνομάτων [fr. 15 Schm.]· καὶ τὰ ἀδόμενα δὲ ὑπ' αὐτῶν κορωνίσματα καλεῖται, ὡς ἱστορεῖ Ἀγνοκλῆς ὁ Ῥόδιος ἐν Κορωνισταῖς. καὶ χελιδονίζειν δὲ καλεῖται παρὰ Ῥοδίοις ἀγερμός τις ἄλλος, περὶ οὗ φησι Θεόγνις ἐν δευτέρῳ Περὶ τῶν Ἐν Ῥόδῳ Θυσιῶν [FGrH 526 F 1] γράφων οὕτως κτλ. Morelli argues that Pamphilus (first century AD) would have resorted to the authority of Theognis and that of a certain Hagnocles of Rhodes in order to better explain, respectively, the terms χελιδονίζειν ('to sing the swallow song') and κορωνιστής/κορώνισμα ('crow beggar'/'crow song'). For his part, Athenaeus would have quoted the passage indirectly, through the Ῥοδιακά, an anonymous work of the first or second century AD, which in turn derives from Pamphilus' treatise Περὶ γλωσσῶν καὶ ὀνομάτων.

perspective, which takes as its primary interest the business of classifying and exemplifying poetic – song or song-like – genres.

What remains is the apparent contradiction between, on the one hand, the anonymous transmission of the *chelidonisma*, and, on the other hand, the authorship of the *koronisma* and the pseudo-Homeric attribution of the Samian *eiresione*. Yet, these dissimilarities in terms of the authorised nature of the text, if they are analysed not according to the over-simplified opposition of ‘anonymous = folk’ vs. ‘authorial = literary’, but rather according to the ‘author-function’ criterion (§1.3.4), may contribute to unify the interpretation of these texts. Without a doubt, the contrast between anonymity and authorship indicates the heterogenous origin and circulation of the three texts, which, albeit through different stages, nevertheless all reached a condition of textualisation and were thus somehow integrated in the body of literature transmitted in antiquity. This incorporation is attested by the very interest of ancient scholarship in contexts of origin and production. This is an interest that, in the case of *PMG* 848, is not expressed by an author’s name, but rather by its differentiation of different (literary) strategies.

The most straightforward case is Phoenix’s *koronisma*. The *koronisma* is authenticated and legitimised by an author’s name, which in turn corresponds to an historical figure. Phoenix of Colophon is the stated composer of the text, and he can be said to have added his specific and more individual literary purposes (cf. *supra* n. 20). Within the literary system of antiquity, the *koronisma* was not only a begging song but also Phoenix’s composition. On the other hand, the case of the Samian *eiresione* is a more complex, but also a more indicative, case of the validating function of authorship. This text is transmitted in the pseudo-Herodotean *Life of Homer* (*Vit. Hom. Herod.* 33.462-482 All.), in which Homer is described as performing the song during his winter stay in Samos. In visiting the wealthiest houses and following a retinue of local children, Homer would sing the *eiresione* in return for gifts (cf. *supra* n. 14). As argued by Beecroft (2010: 61-105), the real focus of the Homeric *Lives* – which are twelve in number – is not the poet, but the poetics of the Homeric texts. In this sense, what counts is not the historical figure of Homer, but the literary function of the author-name ‘Homer’.<sup>70</sup> The pseudo-Herodotean *Life* still reflects a performance-centred notion of epic: Homer is not presented as the composer but as the performer of songs.<sup>71</sup> Yet, the name of ‘Homer’ as ‘author-performer’

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<sup>70</sup> On the literary function of the biographical accounts in the *Lives of Homer*, see also Nagy 2004.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Beecroft 2010: 101f.; Nagy 2004: 44-60 (arguing that the pseudo-Herodotean *Life* corresponds to the ideas of the pre-Panathenaic period, in which ‘Homère est supposé avoir créé (*poieîn*), et non écrit (*gráphein*) ce qu’il a composé’, at p. 44).

serves to authenticate the epigrams contained in the *Life* as literary texts relating to Homeric poetry. Those texts are not used to account for the author's life, but rather, the *Life* is used to ground a literary reading of the texts transmitted in them. In the literary discourse of the pseudo-Herodotean *Life*, the Samian *eiresione* is a textualised version of a begging song, whose textualisation is legitimised by its Homeric attribution.<sup>72</sup>

On the other hand, the literary sources adopt different strategies of authorisation to compensate for the anonymity of *PMG* 848. As discussed above, the anonymity does not determine *per se* the folk-status of the text. Rather, the anonymous transmission of the *chelidonisma* is indicative of a non-operative 'author-function'. *PMG* 848 is an anonymous folksong not because its original author was a poet unworthy of being remembered, but because the identity of whoever composed the text was irrelevant for its performative purposes. In the ancient scholarly discourse, the absence of the author's name relating to *PMG* 848 is compensated by the anecdotic information about Cleobulus as the inventor of the ritual begging in Rhodes. This anecdote can be interpreted not just as indicating a process of 'invented tradition' (cf. *supra*), but also as reflecting a scholarly interest in the contexts of origin and production surrounding *PMG* 848. In this case, however, it is not the author-composer of the text that is mentioned, but the author-inventor of the tradition to which the *chelidonisma* belongs.

Similar anecdotes describing the origins of performative contexts and sometimes their founders are also found in the ancient discussions of the Attic *eiresione* and *PMG* 882. Plutarch (*Vit. Thes.* 22.4-7) relates the origin of the Attic *eiresione* (*carm. pop.* 17 Edmonds) to the aetiology of the Pyanepsia and the mythological account of Theseus, to which the Athenian festival is in turn connected:

θάψας δὲ τὸν πατέρα, τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τὴν εὐχὴν ἀπεδίδου τῇ ἐβδόμῃ τοῦ Πυανεψιδῶνος  
μηνὸς ἱσταμένου· ταύτῃ γὰρ ἀνέβησαν εἰς ἄστρ' σωθέντες [...]. τὴν δὲ εἰρεσιώνην  
ἐκφέρουσι κλάδον ἐλαίας ἐρίῳ μὲν ἀνестεμμένον, ὥσπερ τότε τὴν ἱκετηρίαν,

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<sup>72</sup> The actual contexts of origin and production of the Samian *eiresione* remain uncertain. See e.g. Beecroft (2010: 71): 'It is thus impossible to tell whether the *Vita* (scil. the Pseudo-Herodotean *Vita*) was constructed as a gloss on the epigrams, or the epigrams as an ornament to the *Vita*, or whether (as the greater number of scholars seem to think) neither had an independent existence without the other.' It is not to be excluded that the origin of Samian *eiresione* (and of further texts included in the Pseudo-Herodotean *Life*) is related to the dispute and relationship between the Homeridae of Chios and the Creophylei of Samos (cf. e.g. Condello 2007: 26-35).

παντοδαπῶν δὲ ἀνάπλεων καταργμάτων διὰ τὸ λῆξαι τὴν ἀφορίαν, ἐπάδοντες [*carm. pop.* 17 Edmonds]:

Εἰρεσιώνη σῦκα φέρει καὶ πίονας ἄρτους  
καὶ μέλι ἐν κοτύλῃ καὶ ἔλαιον ἀποψήσασθαι  
καὶ κύλικ' εὕζωρον, ὥς ἄν μεθύουσα καθεύδῃ.

καίτοι ταῦτά τινες ἐπὶ τοῖς Ἡρακλείδαις γίνεσθαι λέγουσιν, οὕτως διατρεφομένοις ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀθηναίων· οἱ δὲ πλείονες ὥς προεῖρηται.

After he had buried his father, Theseus paid his vows to Apollo on the seventh day of Pyanopsion, which was the day on which they went up to Athens after their safe return [...]. The *eiresione* which is carried at the same festival is an olive-branch wreathed with wool, such as Theseus used for his supplication, and laden with all sorts of fruit-offerings in token that the dearth was over, and those who carry it sing:

‘*Eiresione* brings figs and fat loaves and honey in the pot, oil to wipe from the body, and a cup of neat liquor to send her to bed drunk.’

But according to some authorities the rite commemorates the children of Heracles who were thus brought up by the Athenians. The former explanation, however, is more generally given.<sup>73</sup>

The ritual of the *eiresione* would thereby result from an offering to Apollo made by the Athenians to celebrate the victorious return from Crete of Theseus and his companions. The *eiresione*-branch would coincide with Theseus’ ἱκετηρία, the suppliant’s badge (an olive-branch) he dedicated to Apollo before his expedition against the Minotaur.<sup>74</sup> As in the case of

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<sup>73</sup> Transl. Edmonds 1940: 521. Similar or alternative anecdotal information about the origins of the *eiresione*-ritual are contained in other sources (cf. *supra* n. 17). Plutarch too mentions an alternative (minor) account (cf. *supra*) by referring to the myth of the Heraclids, who, in order to escape the wrath of the tyrant Eurystheus, came as suppliants to Athens with branches in their hands.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Plut. *Vit. Thes.* 18.1 γενομένου δὲ τοῦ κλήρου, παραλαβὼν τοὺς λαχόντας ὁ Θησεὺς ἐκ τοῦ πρυτανείου καὶ παρελθὼν εἰς Δελφίνιον, ἔθηκεν ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τὴν ἱκετηρίαν. ἦν δὲ κλάδος ἀπὸ τῆς ἱερᾶς ἐλαίας, ἐρίῳ λευκῇ κατεστεμμένος. Despite the evident similarities (an olive branch wrapped in wool), the ἱκετηρία and the εἰρεσιώνη would represent two different ritual objects with different functions (see Lambin 1992: 360; Ampolo 1988: 233). Cf. also Lact. Plac. *Comm. in Stat. Theb.* 12.492 Sweeney *supplicis arbor olivae: per quam pax petitur supplicando. et in secundo [2.737-738] diximus hanc ab Atheniensibus εἰρεσιώνην dici, a reliquis autem Graecis ἱκετηρίαν.*

the anecdote about Cleobulus as the inventor of the swallow-begging, what is interesting to notice in the anecdote about Theseus as the initiator of the *eiresione*-ritual is not the reliability of the information but its symbolic connotations. By means of this anecdote and the authoritative figure of Theseus, the whole tradition of the *eiresione* is said to have been institutionalised, whereas the text of the Attic *eiresione* is provided with a well-established (though fictional) context of origin and production.

*PMG* 882 is not associated with a precise *πρῶτος εὔρετής*, but rather is more broadly linked – for one scholiast and for readers reading this scholiast – to the aetiological discussion on the origin of bucolic poetry. Within the scholiastic corpus relating to the bucolic poets, the section on the *εὔρεσις τῶν βουκολικῶν* (*Proleg. Theoc. B* 2-3 Wend.) offers three different anecdotes about the invention of this poetic genre.<sup>75</sup> The third account would be the most reliable one (*Proleg. Theoc. Ba* 2.21 Wend. ὁ δὲ ἀληθὴς λόγος οὗτος). In this passage, the scholiast finds the origin of bucolic poetry in songs sung competitively by countrymen at a festival of Artemis in Syracuse (*Proleg. Theoc. Bb* 3.9-15):

τοὺς δὲ νενικημένους (*scil. ἀγροίκους*) εἰς τὰς περιοικίδας χωρεῖν ἀγείροντας ἑαυτοῖς τὰς τροφάς· ἄδειν δὲ ἄλλα τε παιδιᾶς καὶ γέλωτος ἐχόμενα καὶ εὐφημοῦντας ἐπιλέγειν [*PMG* 882].

δέξαι τὰν ἀγαθὰν τύχαν,  
 δέξαι τὰν ὑγίειαν,  
 ἂν φέρομες παρὰ τᾶς θεοῦ,  
 ἂν †ἐκλελάσκετο† τήνα.

The defeated singers went off to the nearby villages begging for food. After singing songs full of fun and laughter they added these words of good omen:

‘Receive the good fortune, receive the good health, which we bring from the goddess (in accordance with her instructions?).’<sup>76</sup>

<sup>75</sup> On this brief treatise, see Bernasconi 2010. The author has been tentatively identified with Theon Grammaticus (see Bernasconi 2010: 31-44).

<sup>76</sup> Transl. Campbell 1993: 269. The reading ἐκλελάσκετο (codex **K**) is not attested, while the codices **E<sup>b</sup>AT** transmit ἐκαλέσσατο (a medieval conjecture?). Many solutions have been tentatively proposed by the editors (cf. Lambin 1992: 352; Neri 2003: 252f.).

This scholiastic information cannot prove that *PMG* 882 is a primordial, pre-literary song, belonging to an undefined archaic period. We do not know when, by whom and with what performative intent this text was originally composed. But what the anecdote tells us is that even an anonymous (pastoral) song such as *PMG* 882 can be discussed from a literary perspective, with a focus on its (presumably invented) contexts of origin and production. Such contexts align with those that also imagine the birth of bucolic poetry.

To conclude, the scholarly interest in the respective contexts of origin and production confirms the integration into the literary discourse of antiquity of anonymous texts such as the *chelidonisma*, the Attic *eiresione* and the Sicilian pastoral song. Such aspects of origin and production are as irrelevant in the folk-mode of perception and reception as are relevant in the literary discourse. While *PMG* 882 is related to the origin of the bucolic poetry, the authoritative figures of Cleobulus and Theseus not only serve to add illustrious pedigree and indeed to institutionalise the ritual contexts in which the Attic *eiresione* and *PMG* 848 are performed, but they also authenticate these texts as textualised songs. From a literary perspective, the lack of the author's name is sometimes compensated, as here, by the presence of the author-inventor of a traditional performance.

## 2.2 Final remarks

My analysis in this chapter has reaffirmed the view of *PMG* 848 as a folksong not on the basis of criteria of origin and composition, but according to modalities of perception and reception. At the same time, this conceptualisation has also allowed me to interpret *PMG* 848 in relation to the other extant *quête*-related texts. In my opinion, two interpretative scenarios are possible, which should not be seen as exclusive from one another. Firstly, *PMG* 848 can be considered a folksong since it is mainly perceived from an occasional-functional perspective, and more specifically, when it is essentially performed in function of the ritual *quête* related to the return of the swallow in springtime. Similar considerations can be made for those texts whose performative contexts seem to involve, more or less directly, the act of begging: compare, for instance, the Attic and Samian *eiresionai* as well as *PMG* 882. More difficult is to identify the actual nature of the performance of Phoenix's *koronisma*. On the other hand, all these texts were part of a process of textualisation in their ancient reception. This means that these texts (including *PMG* 848) were, to different degrees, integrated into a literary discourse, being read and discussed as fixed poems, with a primary focus on their intrinsic formal properties and with a strong interest in their respective contexts of origin and composition. These are all aspects that faded into the background when the same song-texts were used and perceived from a

functional standpoint (as folk songs and nothing more or less). Viewed in this light, the interpretation of *PMG* 848 as a folk song – looked at within its usual performative context – and that of *PMG* 848 as a textualised song (upgraded to a literary level) are no longer in a state of conflict.

On a broader level, my analysis clarifies two significant points mentioned in the first chapter. First, it confirms that folk songs (such as the begging songs) could be included in the literary system of ancient Greek culture, specifically as textualised songs. Second, and closely following on from the first point, the textualisation of folk songs shows how the notion of folksong itself should not be set in direct opposition to the category of literature. The boundaries separating what is ‘folk’ and what is ‘literary’ depend not on concrete and well-defined criteria, but on determined modalities of use and perception within different contexts of reception and analysis.



### 3.0 Introduction

When we approach the category of work song, two main questions need to be addressed: firstly, what criteria are to be used to define a work song? And secondly, in what sense can a work song be considered a folk song? Modern scholarship has generally adopted a narrow conceptualisation ('work song proper'), which in turn reflects its narrow functionalist approach to folksong, as based on preconceived and ideological criteria.<sup>1</sup> In this sense, by 'work song (proper)' is meant an anonymous piece of music sung by a group of workers, in order to coordinate the rhythm of their repetitive manual labour. This practical function would determine the style, the structure, and the words of the song. An example of definition is provided by Beaton (1980: 146):

Work songs, strictly defined, are not just songs sung by people at work. There are several Greek songs recorded which were sung by women at the loom or by shepherds out on the mountains with their sheep, which refer to these occupations in a lyrical manner but which are not therefore work songs. The distinction of the work song proper is that the rhythm and the sound of the words are determined by the nature of the work on hand and actually assist the singers in their task. For this reason they are rarely solo performances, but are chanted by a group, usually with a leader who may give the time and lead off with a solo line which is then taken up by the others. The waulking songs of the Hebrides, British sea-shanties and the songs of American negro work gangs all belong to this type.

In Beaton's definition, there is a clear distinction between generic songs sung at work and songs that are created with the sole purpose of directly pacing and/or coordinating the labour process ('work song proper').<sup>2</sup> This strong emphasis on the

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<sup>1</sup> For an overview of the conceptualisation of 'work song proper' in modern literature, see Korczynski-Pickering-Robertson 2013: 19-34.

<sup>2</sup> A similar definition is used by Bruce Jackson (mentioned in Korczynski-Pickering-Robertson 2013: 22 and n. 10) to describe the Afro-American work-song tradition: a work song would be one that is 'used to pace work, not a song that happened to be sung while someone was working'.

practical values of song at work results in a strict and oversimplified conceptualisation, according to which ‘work song’ is a strictly defined textual category.

Some recent scholarship has challenged the notion of ‘work song proper’ and argued conversely that the nature of the work-song tradition is a great deal more fluid and variegated than the narrow functionalist approach is able to show. In the study of Korczynski–Pickering–Robertson (2013: 62-86), a new approach is delineated which does not dismiss the functional perspective completely, but which explores singing at work across various cultures. They emphasise the fact that work songs can help coordinate functional aspects of work while at the same time performing aesthetic and imaginative dimensions for the singers that cannot be reduced to the physicality of work alone. Such an approach implies that any kind of song, along with its narratives, holds an imaginative power (‘fancy’). Therefore, when certain songs are performed at work, they are capable of fostering all manners of imaginings ‘and so take the singer away from the immediate material conditions of their labour’, by carrying them ‘into the world of the story related by the song’.<sup>3</sup> This also means that the function of work songs cannot be reduced to that of mere rhythmical aid, in order to coordinate the labourers’ activities. The business of keeping time is just one possible aspect of a broader practical purpose which consists in passing time. Singing at work serves to help the hours to pass more quickly and pleasantly. It generally makes the work more tolerable and perhaps enhances its quality, if there is intense involvement of the singers in the narratives of their songs. Only occasionally does the function of passing/alleviating time result in a more direct rhythmical coordination given by the tune and the words of the songs.

The approach described above breaks free of the narrow concept of ‘work song proper’ and focuses attention on singing at work as a social practice. From this perspective, it is also possible to stress the fluidity and variety of the work-song tradition. On the one hand, a multifaceted nature can be noticed even in those songs – such as the waulking songs of the Hebrides and the British sea shanties – whose internal structure and words more directly serve to coordinate the physical movement of the labourers.<sup>4</sup> For instance, the waulking-song repertory included a huge variety of different genres and themes, ranging from love and romance to heroic and comic adventures, praise of great deeds or local gossip, while the sailor songs could express a

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<sup>3</sup> Korczynski–Pickering–Robertson 2013: 71 and 70 respectively.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. especially Korczynski–Pickering–Robertson 2013: 74-82.

wide array of feelings (e.g. homesickness) and further elements (such as broad humour and ribaldry to captivating nonsense) not strictly connected to shipboard labour.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, we need to consider that all kinds of songs, even those that are resolutely unconnected to the practical demands of labour processes, can be sung as a pastime by people while performing a day-to-day work activity. It is apposite here to mention the perspective of a labourer-singer, Harry Cox (1885-1971), a Norfolk farmworker famous for having built up a huge repertoire of around 140 working songs. Interviewed in 1963, Cox said:

You got a nice job, you used to sing all day long. I sung for hours and hours... Anything that come to mind, like this here *Blackberry Fold*. They're the sort of song I used to sing. Anything that come into my mind. I used to sing time I was cutting the turnips for 'em in the shod [shed]... I used to sing these songs as I was chopping it up.<sup>6</sup>

The *Blackberry Fold* mentioned by Cox – also known as *Betsy the Milkmaid* – is not a work song strictly defined, but a popular love ballad widely distributed in nineteenth-century broadsides in southern England and East Anglia. The perspective seen in Beaton's definition above is here partly reversed: since any song can be a work song, the category should instead be defined by performative context, use, and reception rather than as a strict corpus of songs. The critical focus should not lie on intrinsic features of the songs themselves (textual, melodic, or otherwise), given that work-songs are a fluid and potentially all-encompassing category.<sup>7</sup> Work songs cannot be strictly defined because any kind of song – 'anything that come to mind', as Cox has it – can be used as work songs, that is to say, as songs that accompany the work and help to ease it along. Therefore, when we approach the category of work song, we do not have to think of a specific textual genre, with a well-defined structure and peculiar formal traits. Rather than pinpointing texture and text, the focus should be on context. On this view, singing at work represents a performative platform in which a great

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<sup>5</sup> We also need to take into consideration the multi-ethnic origins of sea shanties (cf. Korczynski-Pickering-Robertson 2013: 81). On sea shanties and sailing songs, cf. also Gioia 2006: 118-126.

<sup>6</sup> Cox was interviewed by Charles Parker (see Korczynski-Pickering-Robertson 2013: 68 and n. 8).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Korczynski-Pickering-Robertson 2013: 27.

number of different songs and song-types may be employed, such as broadsides and music hall songs, comic and bawdy songs, love songs and venerable ballads, as well as religious hymns, laments, and so on.<sup>8</sup>

The conceptualisation just delineated, which retains the element of functionality in the work-song tradition, but at the same time emphasises its fluidity and variety, can be integrated with the notion of folksong I have offered in the introductory chapter (§1.3). Work songs too can be considered folk songs, since they are essentially performed in function of a specific (work) activity, as rhythmical and coordinating aids, or more generally, as a (pleasant) diversion from the effort and the monotony of labour. Work songs are ‘folk’ because of their use and perception, which are mainly understood from an occasional-functional standpoint (§1.3.2). This also means that work songs are actualised in synchronic reperformances (i.e. day-to-day work), and in this sense they can be considered ‘traditional’ by being an integral part of recurring (daily) events (§1.3.3). Moreover, work songs are ‘anonymous’ in the sense that they do not need to be authorised by an (external) authorial voice. No matter who (and with what intentions) has originally composed/performed them, the speaking voice of the work song is represented by the members of the various occupational groups, who act as both ‘producers’ (performers) and ‘consumers’ (audiences) of the same songs (§1.3.4).

So far, we have seen the advantages of adopting a definition of work song that goes beyond narrow perspectives (‘work song proper’). In the next sections (§3.1 and §3.2), I shall reflect upon the variety and fluidity of work-song repertoires in ancient Greece, by taking as case studies two texts generally included in the collection of the *carmina popularia*, respectively *PMG* 849 and 869. Before entering the main discussion, it is however useful to present a general overview of the work-song tradition in antiquity. Once we have established that ancient attitudes to work song are varied, we will be better prepared to fully appreciate the attitude of the sources quoting 849 and 869 below.

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. also Gioia’s definition (2006: xi): ‘As a result, my definition of a ‘work song’ may strike some readers as overly inclusive. I did not restrict myself to the African American tradition [...] I found that it was sometimes important to address songs *about* work, as well as the songs actually sung while working.’

Singing at work is a well-attested activity in ancient Greece.<sup>9</sup> A clear example is provided by a passage of Longus' novel *Daphnis and Chloe*, in which the protagonists happen to be attending a performance of sailing songs (Long. *Past.* 3.21):

[...] ναῦς ἀλιέων ὤφθη παραπλέουσα. ἄνεμος μὲν οὐκ ἦν, γαλήνη δὲ ἦν, καὶ ἐρέττειν ἐδόκει καὶ ἥρεττον ἐρρωμένως· ἠπεύγοντο γὰρ νεαλεῖς ἰχθῦς εἰς τὴν πόλιν διασώσασθαι τῶν τινι πλουσίων. οἷον οὖν εἰώθασι ναῦται δρᾶν ἐς καμάτων ἀμέλειαν, τοῦτο κάκεῖνοι δρῶντες τὰς κόπας ἀνέφερον· εἷς μὲν αὐτοῖς κελευστὴς ναυτικᾶς ἦδεν ᾠδὰς, οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ καθάπερ χορὸς ὁμοφώνως κατὰ καιρὸν τῆς ἐκείνου φωνῆς ἐβόων.

[...] a fishing boat came into view as it sailed by. There was no wind and the sea was calm, so they had decided to row and were rowing hard, since they were in a hurry to deliver some newly caught fish to a certain rich man in the city while it was fresh. As they pulled their oars they did what sailors typically do to take their minds off their toil: one, acting as boatswain, sang sea shanties while the others piped up in unison, like a chorus, at the prompting of his voice.<sup>10</sup>

Here, the rowers are clearly said to strike up songs as a form of distraction from their physical efforts. Moreover, on the basis of the comparison with modern traditions of sailing songs (cf. *supra*), it can be supposed that the rowers described in Longus sang even to pace their movements and make them more effective. Broadly speaking, the functionality of song at work seems to have been recognised since antiquity.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, the ancient sources that touch upon work song tend to tell us more about the literary reception of these kinds of texts than they do about the performative reality

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<sup>9</sup> On work songs in ancient Greece, see Mihăescu 1956; Robbins 1996; Karanika 2014. One of the crucial points gained from the study of Karanika is the fluidity of repertoires of songs at work (cf. *infra* in this chapter).

<sup>10</sup> Transl. Henderson 2009: 129. Cf. also *POxy* 425, 1383, generally interpreted as (very fragmentary) sailors' songs (see e.g. Pordomingo 1996: 471, 473, 474, 480; Palmisciano 2014: 22; Barbantani 2017: 376). Other references to work-related songs are found in Longus' novel (see Karanika 2014: 139-144).

<sup>11</sup> For other (Greek and Latin) references stressing the practical function of work songs, see Mihăescu 1956: 107-109. Cf. also Theoc. *Id.* 10. 21-23 (discussed *infra* §3.1).

and the actual aesthetic, emotional, and intellectual content of work songs for their ancient singers.

Examples of actual discussions of work songs can also be found in Aristophanes and Athenaeus. In two passages of Aristophanes, work songs serve as a basis to emphatically paint some authorial poetic traditions in a negative light. In other words, through his fictional characters, Aristophanes voices a cultural bias which considers the category of work song *en bloc* as a lowbrow form of poetry. In Ar. *Nub.* 1353-1358, Strepsiades tells that, after having asked his son Pheidippides to sing a song by Simonides (fr. 16 Poltera = *PMG* 507), he received the reply that ‘it was old fashioned to play the lyre and sing at a drinking party, like a woman hulling barley’ (ὁ δ’ εὐθέως ἀρχαῖον εἶν’ ἔφασκε τὸ κιθαρίζειν / ᾄδειν τε πίνονθ’ ὥσπερὶ κάχρυς γυναῖκ’ ἀλοῦσαν).<sup>12</sup> The meaning behind this comparison is that, in Pheidippides’ eyes, Simonides’ verses recited during a symposium appear to be as dull and monotonous as the (supposedly) *démodé* songs performed by women while grinding barley.<sup>13</sup> Pheidippides is contrasting these two kinds of lyric (sympotic work songs) against what he considers to be the new and more sophisticated musical tastes, which, in Aristophanes’ play, are represented by the ‘highbrow’ works by Euripides.<sup>14</sup> More generally, as regards the grinding-song tradition, its widespread knowledge in ancient Greece – under the names of ἐπιμύλιος or ἱμαῖος/ἱμαλὶς ᾠδή – is attested by other (lexicographic) sources,<sup>15</sup> but *PMG* 869 constitutes our only extant textual evidence. In what follows (3.2), I shall show that *PMG* 869 could also appear not as a dull and

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<sup>12</sup> Transl. Henderson 1998: 193.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Karanika (2014: 2): ‘Songs performed while hulling and grinding the grain epitomize songs perceived as lacking aesthetic value and a contemporary and a contemporary style and rhythm. To a great extent the opinion expressed by Pheidippides in *Clouds*, as reported by his father, reflects the way working songs have regarded in ancient as well as modern times. They are seen as lacking variety and are associated with patterns of work that have not changed dramatically over time.’

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Dover 1968: 251-253; Sommerstein 1982: 225; Guidorizzi 1996: 339.

<sup>15</sup> See Ar. Byz. fr. 340 Slater (*ap.* Ath. 14.619b) Ἀριστοφάνης δ’ ἐν Ἀττικαῖς φησιν Λέξεσιν· ἱμαῖος ᾠδὴ μυλωθρῶν, Tryphon fr. 113 Velsen (*ap.* Ath. 14.618c-d) καὶ ᾠδῆς δὲ ὀνομασίας καταλέγει ὁ Τρύφων τάσδε· ἱμαῖος ἢ ἐπιμύλιος καλουμένη, ἣν παρὰ τοὺς ἀλέτους ἦδον, ἴσως ἀπὸ τῆς ἱμαλίδος. ἱμαλὶς δ’ ἐστὶν παρὰ Δωριεῦσιν ὁ νόστος καὶ τὰ ἐπίμετρα τῶν ἀλεύρων, Poll. 4.53 ἐπιμύλιος ᾠδὴ ἱμαλὶς καὶ ἱμαῖος, ὁ δ’ ᾄδων ἱμαϊδός, Hsch. ι 599 L. \*ἱμαλὶς· ἢ ἐπιμύλιος ᾠδὴ. ἢ σταφυλῆς εἶδος, 600 L. ἱμαῖος· ᾠδὴ ἐπιμύλιος, καὶ ἐπάντλιος, καὶ ἐπίνοστος.

monotonous song, but as a song-text enjoyable enough to be integrated into a literary context.

The second Aristophanic passage in which work songs are ironically and negatively compared to an authorial poetic product is Ar. *Ran.* 1296f. τί τὸ ‘φλαττοθρατ’ τοῦτ’ ἐστίν; ἐκ Μαραθῶνος ἢ / πόθεν συνέλεξας ἱμονιοστρόφου μέλη; (‘What’s this brumda brumda brumda brum? Did you collect these rope-winders’ songs from Marathon or someplace?’).<sup>16</sup> After the parody of Aeschylean lyrics, in which Euripides uses the verse-filler φλαττοθραττοφλαττοθρατ to imitate the toneless melody of his opponent’s verses (Il. 1284-95), Dionysus ironically asks Aeschylus where he got these songs of a rope-winder from (ἱμονιοστρόφου μέλη). In this parodic exaggeration, the sound of the cithara accompanying Aeschylus’ lyrics is compared to the repetitive and monotonous rhythms of well songs.

Thus, in these two Aristophanic passages, work songs are seen through the subjective and biased lenses of the various characters who, in compliance with their specific dramatic needs, reproduce the cultural polarity of ‘high’ and ‘low’. On this view, work songs are considered as hopelessly undeveloped and unsophisticated poetic products.

This kind of pejorative view of folk forms can be found side by side with more sympathetic, or at least non-evaluative, attitudes to the same material, as is the case in Book 14 of Athenaeus’ *Deipnosophistae*. Here work songs seem to be part of a broader intellectual interest in classifying and cataloguing musical performances as a whole. The following list of work-related songs is reported (Ath. 14.618c-619b): the song of millers (ἱμαῖος), the song of wool-workers (αἴλινος and ἱουλος), the song of harvesters (Λιτυέρσης), generic songs of hired labourers (καὶ τῶν μισθωτῶν δέ τις ἦν ὥδῃ τῶν ἐς τοὺς ἀγροὺς φοιτῶντων), bath tenders (καὶ βαλανέων ἄλλαι) and women winnowing grain (καὶ τῶν πτισσουσῶν ἄλλη τις), as well as the song of herders (βουκολιασμός). The internal logic of Athenaeus’ list (and that of his sources)<sup>17</sup> needs some clarification.

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<sup>16</sup> Transl. Henderson 2002: 201. Properly, the ἱμονιοστρόφος is someone who turns a well-rope (ἱμονιά) and hauls it up (cf. Del Corno 1985: 234; Dover 1993: 349; Sommerstein 1996: 272). According to the scholium *ad locum* the song of water-drawers is also called ἱμαῖος, which, as seen above, bears the same terminology as the grinding song. On this double interpretation, cf. *infra* n. 27.

<sup>17</sup> The list opens with a quotation from Tryphon fr. 113 Velsen: καὶ ὥδῃς δὲ ὀνομασίας καταλέγει ὁ Τρύφων τάσδε κτλ. (an excerpt from *On Terminology*). Tryphon was a grammarian of the

As can be noticed, in some cases a specific terminology is given, while in others the songs are simply identified by their performers, who are categorised into specific occupational groups. What is not discussed is a proper conceptualisation of work song. Although it is evident that these are songs somehow tied to various labour activities, Athenaeus does not list them as work songs, nor does he claim that work is his central unifying principle. Therefore, it does not come as a surprise that in the middle of this list a few texts are included that are not work songs strictly defined (Ath. 14.618d-f): the hymns to Demeter are called ἱουλοὶ (as the spinning song),<sup>18</sup> lullabies are described as songs of wet nurses (αἱ δὲ τῶν τιτθευουσῶν ᾠδαὶ καταβαυκαλήσεις ὀνομάζονται), and one song is named ἀλῆτις, which was sung at the festival of ‘swings’ (ἐῶραι). Such anomalies can be explained if we consider the encyclopaedic nature of the musicological interest that pervades the entire first part of Book 14 of Athenaeus’ *Deipnosophistae*. What is offered here is a broad overview of musical instruments and their melodies, different performers and their performances, as well as types of songs and dance.<sup>19</sup> In the brief extract analysed above, Athenaeus does not deal with the category of work song in a specific way, because he is not interested in exploring what work songs represent in their actual performative contexts or what kinds of social values they may express. In the *Deipnosophistae*, work songs constitute nothing but examples (however peculiar) of musical compositions. As stated by Karanika (2014: 134), Athenaeus’ Book 14 ‘shows an intellectual interest, as these references are part of a library compilation, not an anthropological interest in genres of daily practice’.<sup>20</sup>

To sum up, there is not a single, monolithic view of work song in antiquity. Nevertheless, work-song traditions were widely known, described and discussed by the ancient sources, though from different (and sometimes biased) perspectives. Significantly, a series of work-related songs triggered the interest of ancient scholars to

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second half of the first century BC (cf. Dickey 2007: 84f.). Quotations from other sources occur in the passage, but it is not always clear whether they directly derive from Tryphon or not (cf. *infra* n. 24).

<sup>18</sup> PMG 849 is quoted as an example of such hymns. However, I shall show the fluid nature of this text, wavering between a threshing song and a religious hymn (§3.1).

<sup>19</sup> On the musicological interests of Athenaeus’ Book 14, cf. Restani 1988; Ceccarelli 2000; Karanika 2014: 133-136. In the same book, *carm. pop.* PMG 850, 851 (§4.1.1) and 852 are quoted.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. further p. 135: ‘The tradition of work songs is of interest to the world of Athenaeus only to the extent that it is known to the public through historians, dramatists, or other lexicographers. Firsthand exposure to the genres seems quite limited.’



such an extent that their specific terminology was recorded and, in at least in two cases (i.e. *PMG* 849 and 869), even their lyrics were set down in writing. In what follows, I shall explore the nature of *PMG* 849 and 869 by reading between the lines of the ancient scholarship that quotes them. I shall analyse in detail how the ancient sources used and perceived these texts and what this use and perception can tell us about the reception of the work-song tradition in antiquity.

### 3.1 The *ioulos*-song tradition (*PMG* 849): between work and religion

EDD *Carm. pop.* 3 Neri = 849 Campbell = *PMG* 849 = 25 Edmonds = 29 Diehl = 1 Smyth = 1 Bergk = 21 Schneidewin.

FONT (I) Ath. 14.618d-e ἡ (*scil.* ῥδῆ) δὲ τῶν ταλασιουργῶν ἰουλος. Σῆμος δ' ὁ Δήλιος ἐν τῷ *Περὶ Παιάνων* (*FGrH* 396 F 23) φησί· 'τὰ δράγματα τῶν κριθῶν αὐτὰ καθ' αὐτὰ προσηγόρευον ἀμάλας· συναθροισθέντα δὲ καὶ ἐκ πολλῶν μίαν γενόμενα δέσμην οὔλους καὶ ἰούλους καὶ τὴν Δήμητρα ὅτε μὲν Χλόην, ὅτε δὲ Ἰουλῶ. ἀπὸ τῶν οὖν τῆς Δήμητρος εὐρημάτων τούτους τε καρπούς καὶ τοὺς ὕμνους τοὺς εἰς τὴν θεὸν οὔλους καλοῦσι καὶ ἰούλους.' δημήτρουλοι καὶ καλλίουλοι. καὶ [*PMG* 849]. ἄλλοι δὲ φασιν ἐριουργῶν εἶναι τὴν ῥδῆν. || (II) Eust. *II.* 555, 1162.40-44, 4.253.4-11 v.d.V. ἐν δὲ τοῖς τοῦ Ἀθηναίου φέρεται καὶ ὅτι τὰ δράγματα τῶν κριθῶν αὐτὰ καθ' αὐτὰ ἐλέγετο ἀμάλλαι. ἀθροισθέντα δὲ εἰς δέσμην ἐκαλοῦντο ἰουλοι, πρὸς ὁμοιότητα ἴσως ἢ τοῦ κατὰ τὴν ἥβην ἰούλου ἐν τοῖς προσώποις ἢ τοῦ πολυπόδος ζωυφίου ἢ διὰ τὸ ἰέναι εἰς ὁλότητα. ἐξ αὐτῶν δὲ καὶ Δήμητρος ἰουλοι, καὶ συνθέτως δημητρίουλοι, ὕμνοι εἰς Δήμητραν, οἱ καὶ καλλίουλοι, καὶ ἐπιφώνημα ἐμμελές τὸ [*PMG* 849]. ἐνθα τὸ οὔλον οὔλον οὐκ ἂν εἶη δηλοῦν τὸ ὀλέθριον, ἀλλ' ἕτερόν τι εὐφημότερον. τοιοῦτον δὲ τὸ ὄλον καὶ τὸ ὕγιες καὶ τὸ συνειλημμένον ἦτοι συνεστραμμένον.

πλεῖστον οὔλον οὔλον ἴει, ἰουλον ἴει.

Numeri incerti: cf. Meineke 1867: 296 (Meinke 1846: 34); Bergk 1882: 654; Neri 2003: 204.

Codd.: (I) ACE, (II) LP.

|| οὔλον semel II(P), Bergk<sup>2,3,4</sup>, dub. Meineke, Page, Olson | ἰουλον] οὔλον II(P).

Cf. Eratosth. fr. 10 Pow. ἥ χερνήτις ἔριθος ἐφ' ὕψηλοῦ πυλεῶνος / δενδαλίδας τεύχουσα καλοὺς ἤειδεν ἰούλους, Apollod. *FGrH* 244 F 149 καθάπερ ἐν μὲν θρήνοις Ἰάλεμος, ἐν δὲ ὕμνοις Ἰουλος, ἀφ' ὧν καὶ τὰς ῥδᾶς αὐτὰς καλοῦσιν, οὕτω καὶ τῶν θεριστῶν ῥδῆ Λιτυέρσας, Poll. 1.38 ῥδαὶ εἰς θεοὺς κοινῶς μὲν παιᾶνες, ὕμνοι, ἰδίως δὲ Ἀρτέμιδος ὕμνος οὔπιγος, Ἀπόλλωνος ὁ παιάν, ἀμφοτέρων προσόδια, Διονύσου διθύραμβος, Δήμητρος ἰουλος· λίνος γὰρ καὶ λιτυέρσης σκαπανέων ῥδαὶ καὶ γεωργῶν, Ath. 14.619b αὶ δὲ ἰουλοι καλούμεναι ῥδαὶ Δήμητρι καὶ Φερσεφόνη πρέπουσι, *schol.* Ap. Rhod. 1.972a Wendel (cf. Lachenaud 2010: 142-145) ἰουλος δὲ καλεῖται ἢ πρώτη ἐξάνθησις καὶ ἔκφυσις τῶν ἐν τῷ γενεῖω τριχῶν. ὁ μέντοι Ἐρατοσθένης ὄνομα ῥδῆς ἐρίθων ἀπέδωκεν, ἐν τῷ Ἑρμῇ λέγων οὕτω· [fr. 10 Pow.]. οὐκ ἔστι δέ, φησὶ Δίδυμος (fr. 1.5.32 Schmidt), ἀλλ' ὕμνος εἰς Δήμητρα ὡς ὁ οὔπιγος παρὰ Τροιζηνίοις εἰς Ἀρτεμιν. ἔστι γὰρ οὔλος καὶ ἰουλος ἢ ἐκ τῶν δραγμάτων συναγομένη δέσμη καὶ Οὐλῶ

ἡ Δημήτηρ, 2.43 Wendel (cf. Lachenaud 2010: 206f.) λέγεται δὲ ἰουλος καὶ θηρίον πολύπουν καὶ εἶδος ῥοῆς, ὡς φησιν Ἐρατοσθένης, Hsch. ι 762 L. ἰουλοι· [...] ἰουλοι δὲ καὶ οὔλοι αἱ ἐκ τῶν δραγμάτων συναγόμεναι δέσμαι, Phot. ι 149 Th. ἰουλος· [...] καὶ ῥοῆς τι γένος ἰουλος, <ῶς> καὶ <οὔπιγγος> ὁ προσφιλὴς τῇ Ἀρτέμειδι, 150 Th. ἰουλος· τὸ δασὺ ἐπίσειον τῶν γενείων. καὶ ῥοῆς εἰς Δήμητρα· τοὺς γὰρ ἐκ πολλῶν δραγμάτων δεσμοὺς ἰούλους καλοῦσι, Suda ι 442 A. ἰουλος· [...] καὶ ῥοῆς τι γένος ἰουλος, καὶ ὁ προσφιλὴς τῇ Ἀρτέμειδι, Etym. Magn. 472.26-38 Gaisf. (cf. Etym. Gen. **AB**, ap. Wendel 1935: 85) ἰουλος· [...] ἔστι δὲ καὶ ῥοῆς ὄνομα, ὡς φησιν Ἐρατοσθένης ἐν τῷ Ἑρμῇ· [fr. 10 Pow.], Tzetz. in Lycophr. 23 Scheer ἰουλος δὲ σημαίνει δ', τὸν σκώληκα τοῦτον, τὴν ἐξάνθησιν τῶν γενείων, τὴν συστροφὴν τῶν τριχῶν καὶ τὸν ὕμνον, ὡς φησι Ἐρατοσθένης ἐν Ἑρμῇ· [fr. 10 Pow.], Tzetz. Chil. 13.557-560 Leone καὶ ἰουλος ὁ ὕμνος δε πλὴν θηλυκῇ τῇ κλήσει, ὡς ἐν Ἑρμῇ διδάσκει μοι καλῶς Ἐρατοσθένης· [fr. 10 Pow.].

Toss me a sheaf, the largest sheaf, toss me a sheaf!

*PMG* 849 is a refrain related to the *ioulos*-song tradition. In this section, I shall explore in more detail the nature of this relationship and the nature of that tradition in itself. My analysis will emphasise the close connection between work songs and other ritual song-genres (such as hymns and laments), reflecting on the implications that this fluidity of genres has for the conception of work song itself. I shall start the discussion with an overview of the *ioulos*-song tradition. Secondly, I shall compare the *ioulos* song with other work-related song traditions.

Athenaeus' passage, in which *PMG* 849 is quoted, deals more broadly with the *ioulos*-song tradition (Ath. 14.618d-e):

The song sung by women spinning wool is an *ioulos*. Semus of Delos says in his *On Paeans*: 'they referred to the individual handful of cut barley as *amalai*; but when these were gathered together and a number of them were made into a single bundle, (they called them) *ouloi* or *iouloi*; they also referred to Demeter as Chloê ('Green'), at other times as Ioulô. As a consequence of Demeter's inventions, therefore, they refer to both the crops and the hymns directed to the goddess as *ouloi* or *iouloi*.' (There are) *Dêmêtrouloi* and *kalliouloi*. Also: [*PMG* 849]. But other authorities claim that the song is sung by wool-workers.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Transl. Olson 2011: 125, 127 (slightly adapted). Cf. FONS I for the Greek text.

The passage shows two different interpretations about the so-called *ioulos* song. On the one hand, the *ioulos* denotes a song sung by women spinning wool.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, the *ioulos* is considered a hymn in honour of Demeter.<sup>23</sup> The latter alternative is offered by Semus of Delos (*FGrH* 396 F 23),<sup>24</sup> who etymologically relates the hymns' names to the identical term ἰουλος (or οὔλος), which means 'barley sheaf' and is therefore tied to the sphere of Demeter (goddess of agriculture).<sup>25</sup> The passage continues by mentioning what seems to be a different terminology used to indicate these kinds of hymns (δημήτρουλοι and καλλίουλοι) and by citing a ritual formula or refrain (*PMG* 849), in which both οὔλος and ἰουλος clearly occur in the original sense of 'barley sheaf'.<sup>26</sup>

As regards this double interpretation, there is no need to exclude one alternative over the other. A song of wool-workers, also named ἰουλος but for different etymological reasons,<sup>27</sup> may have actually existed in antiquity, even though this song

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<sup>22</sup> This interpretation is likely to belong to Tryphon fr. 113 Velsen, whose quotation opens Athenaeus' list of work-related songs (cf. *supra* n. 17). The same interpretation is recalled by the last sentence of the passage, which may belong to Athenaeus' summing up of this digression on the *ioulos* song.

<sup>23</sup> Fitton (1975) argues that the *ioulos*-hymn is also related to Artemis and to Delian initiation rites. Against this hypothesis, see Magnani (2013: 56-59), who is, however, in favour of a Delian origin of *PMG* 849 (the fragment is quoted by a Delian historian, cf. *infra* n. 24). The interpretation of the *ioulos* as a hymn to Demeter (and Persephone) is restated elsewhere by Athenaeus (14.619b; not from the same passage of Semus, but 'presumably from a different source', see Olson 2011: 128 n. 61) and is also found in other sources: see Apollod. *FGrH* 244 F 149 (cf. *infra*), Did. fr. 1.5.32 Schmidt (cf. *infra*), Phot. ι 149, 150 Th., *Suda* ι 442 A.

<sup>24</sup> Semus was a Delian historian of the second half of the third century BC. A *terminus post quem* of 250 BC is fixed on the basis of epigraphic evidence. On Semus, see Jacoby 1923; Lanzillotta 1996; Thomas 2014: 246-248; Bertelli 2016. It is unclear whether Semus' quotation was already included in Tryphon's passage (fr. 113 Velsen) or not. If not, Athenaeus may have quoted Semus either through a different intermediary source or – as is supposed by Zecchini (1989: 158) – directly from his work *On Paeans*.

<sup>25</sup> On Demeter associated with grain growth and the baking of bread, cf. e.g. *ThesCRA* 6.309.

<sup>26</sup> The words δημήτρουλοι καὶ καλλίουλοι and the quotation of *PMG* 849 seem to be additional information coherent with the previous explicative context, but syntactically unconnected with it. Both pieces of information could have been added already by Semus or later by Athenaeus through another source, in order to corroborate the previous argument.

<sup>27</sup> The term οὔλος means, among other things, 'woolly' (LSJ<sup>9</sup> s.v. (B)). Another song name which in fact represents two different types of (work) songs is the so-called ἱμαῖος (*scil.* ᾠδή). Both

was likely to be unrelated to the *ioulos* as a religious hymn.<sup>28</sup> In what follows, I shall focus only on the latter typology and explore whether and in what sense *PMG* 849 can be considered a religious hymn in honour of Demeter. My analysis will reveal a more complex picture than the one described by the ancient sources, in which the performative nature of *PMG* 849 will be related to both religion and work.

As a religious hymn, *PMG* 849 has been interpreted in the sense of a prayer addressed to Demeter to ask her for an abundant harvest: ‘Demeter, grant us the largest sheaf.’<sup>29</sup> However, a closer look at the verbal tenses used in the fragment can lead to a different scenario, which is still connected with the sphere of Demeter (agriculture), but which more directly involves harvesters singing during their work activity of threshing grain. In *PMG* 849, the use of the present, over the aorist, imperative (ἴει twice) is significant. Modern scholarship has amply shown that the aorist imperative is more frequent than the present imperative in ancient Greek prayers to the gods.<sup>30</sup> The reasons

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Aristophanes of Byzantium (fr. 340 Slater, *ap.* Ath. 14.619b) and Tryphon (fr. 113 Velsen, *ap.* Ath. 14.618c-d) considered it a miller’s song, maybe on the basis of the Doric word ἰμαλῖς ‘yield (of flour)’, ‘extra measures of flour’. Cf. also Hsch. ι 600 L. ἰμαῖος· ὥδῃ ἐπιμύλιος, καὶ ἐπάντλιος, καὶ ἐπίνοστος. By contrast, according to a scholium to Aristophanes’ *Frogs* (*schol.* Ar. *Ran.* 1297a-b Chantry), ἰμαῖος is properly a well song, presumably on the basis of ἰμονία (‘well-rope’). The same scholium also quotes Callim. *Hecale* fr. 74.25 Hollis, in which ἰμαῖος evidently represents a song of water-drawers. On this double interpretation about the ἰμαῖος song, cf. Winkler 1978-79; Hollis 2009: 255; Cozzoli 2012: 187.

<sup>28</sup> On the contrary, Fitton (1975) argues that the *ioulos* was originally a song of wool-spinners and then ‘was transferred to the agricultural sphere because of symbolic similarities. The natural assumption is that the developing hair on a male adolescent’s face was equated with the sprouting crops in the fields’ (p. 231). Symbolic similarities are also involved in the para-etymologies provided by Eust. *II.* 555, 1162.40-44, 4.253.4-11 v.d.V. (cf. FONS II). However, Fitton’s assumption, merely based on ἰουλος meaning ‘down’ (cf. LSJ<sup>9</sup> s.v.), is not convincing *per se*. It is highly speculative to assume that the metaphor needs to start with wool and expand to agriculture (why not the other way around?). Moreover, even if such a genealogy of the metaphor were possible, once the term had started to be used in both agricultural and wool-working contexts then it simply had multiple meanings. Etymology does not really help us unpack the use of the term in its particular context.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. e.g. Schweighäuser 1805: 364; Cerrato 1885: 214-216; Mihăescu 1956: 110; Fitton 1975: 227f.; Aubriot-Sévin 1992: 36; Adrados 2007: 70.

<sup>30</sup> In the *carmina popularia*, examples of aorist imperatives used to address the gods are τράγων in *PMG* 847 (Demeter), ὕσον (twice) in *PMG* 854.1 (Zeus), ἐλθεῖν (jussive infinitive) in *PMG* 871.1 (Dionysus): all texts are analysed in Ch. 4. There are obviously exceptions: cf. e.g. the present imperative in *carm. pop.* 872 ἀνάβαλλ’ ἄνω τὸ γῆρας, ὦ καλὰ Ἀφροδίτα (‘put off old age, beautiful Aphrodite’).

for this inclination are much debated, but are generally considered as depending on the different aspectual functions of the two tenses.<sup>31</sup> The punctual aorist would be more suitable than the durative present in a specific *precatio*, because ‘the speaker addresses to the god a request which usually regards a precise action’ (Eco Conti 2014: 119). Moreover, the aorist tense in prayers might represent a venerable and well-established trait used by the worshippers to communicate with the gods as politely and carefully as possible.<sup>32</sup> So what can the occurrence of the present imperatives in *PMG* 849 point to instead? According to Eco Conti (2014), ‘the present occurs more frequently when the subject and the object are non-quantified and non-countable’ (*ibid.* p. 125), so that ‘the actions ordered with the imperatives are connoted by an indefinite repetition’ (*ibid.* p. 121). This might also be the case in *PMG* 849. If the non-countable object is represented by barley sheaves, we can suppose that the non-quantified subject of the verbs is not (the single) Demeter but an undefined group of reapers. On this view, the imperatives in *PMG* 849 are addressed to the reapers who are intent on their job, by denoting an iterative ritual action – that of tossing bundled sheaves to one another – to which *PMG* 849 helps to give the rhythm: ‘You, reaper, toss me (a reaper like you) a sheaf’. Similar imperative formulae are familiar in modern work songs. For instance, one may think of the famous cotton-picking song from the Afro-American tradition: ‘Jump down, turn around, pick a ball of cotton’.<sup>33</sup> Although we cannot altogether reject the possibility that in antiquity the song could also be intended (and used) as a prayer to Demeter (cf. *infra*), the iterative present encourages us to read *PMG* 849 as the refrain the reapers repeated at the time of harvesting and threshing, in order to set the rhythm of their own

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<sup>31</sup> On the aspectual differences between the present and the aorist imperatives in ancient Greek prayers, see Grassi 1963; Bakker 1966; Pasini 1970; Aubriot-Sévin 1992: 263-270; Pulleyn 1997: 221-226; Eco Conti 2014.

<sup>32</sup> See Pulleyn (1997: 226): ‘as Duhoux has argued, there may be a sense in which the punctual aorist commended itself to the cautious worshipper as more restrained and polite than a durative present [...]. Duhoux’s theory, then, rests on a fairly traditional view of aspect but it goes on from there to suggest that the predominance of aorists in prayer may be explained in terms of a wish on the part of some worshippers not to seem greedy.’

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Neri 2003: 205. On the cotton-picking songs, see also Gioia 2006: 46f., 88.

job.<sup>34</sup> And this rhythmicality is well marked by the repetition of sounds occurring in the refrain.<sup>35</sup>

These considerations raise further questions about the nature of *PMG* 849: Why is this fragment apparently discussed as an example of a hymn to Demeter in Athenaeus' passage? Can we perhaps suppose that the reapers' refrain was included in a larger song which was somehow connected to the cult of Demeter? If we consider the fluidity and variety of the repertoires of songs at work – as have been highlighted above for the modern tradition (§3.0) – we are able to provide a positive answer. Ample evidence points to singing of religious hymns in various work cultures in the modern era,<sup>36</sup> and as I will show, ritual elements or religious themes freely hybridised with ancient work songs too. Moreover, as has already been discussed, a great range of genres, themes and narrative elements (completely unrelated to work) were even found in those song traditions whose internal features were more strictly tied to the practical value of pacing the labour. This might also be the case for *PMG* 849, as a rhythmical refrain sung by reapers at the time of harvesting. In similar songs, reapers not only coordinated their manual labour but also thanked Demeter for the fruits she herself had produced as the goddess of agriculture.<sup>37</sup> The *ioulos*-song tradition, of which *PMG* 849

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<sup>34</sup> This interpretative line interpretation is also implied – but not properly accounted for – in Lambin 1992: 140f. ('L' *oulos* était la chanson de la 'gerbe d'orge', et la chanson de ceux qui chargeaient les gerbes sur les charrettes: le refrain cité [...] est suffisamment clair, et d'autant plus précieux qu'il paraît le seul vestige authentique de ces chants de paysans', p. 141).

<sup>35</sup> For this reason, Diehl (1925: 200) disagrees with the reading of Bergk, who decided to print οὔλον only once (cf. apparatus).

<sup>36</sup> See Korczynski–Pickering–Robertson 2013: 46 (English framework knitters and stockings singing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs), 73f. (English weavers singing religious hymns and Christmas carols), 82 (Portland quarrymen singing religious hymns), 85f. (Scottish fishers singing Hebrew psalms and prayers), 102 (Scottish fisher lassies singing popular hymns). Cf. also Gioia 2006: 235 ('Perhaps the greatest – and most effective – source of inspiration for these new protest songs [*scil.* work songs in post-Industrial Revolution Europe] would be religious hymns. Far more than traditional work songs, these sacred compositions set the proper tone for the new music of labor. With their fervor and their promise for a better world in the future, the sacred songs offered both powerful imagery as well as familiar melodies, easy for workers to sing and share').

<sup>37</sup> Cf. also the analysis in Karanika 2014: 153-159 ('I suggest that it [*scil.* *PMG* 849] functioned as a refrain to songs to Demeter that was repeated by people as they worked in the fields', p. 155).

is part, is thus interpretable as a fluid genre, where work and religion are closely connected.

Let us now reflect more extensively upon the aspects of fluidity and variety in the work-song tradition of ancient Greece. First, let us explore the implications of such aspects for the specific case of the *ioulos* song (and *PMG* 849). Secondly, a comparison with other work-related songs will be drawn.

The fluid nature of the *ioulos* song may lead to the assumption that this genre was also performed in multiple contexts, be they non-work contexts or in contexts still related to work (and Demeter) but other than threshing and reaping. As regards the first scenario, Karanika (2014: 123-127), in her study on work songs in ancient Greece, offers a comparative perspective on vintage songs from the Modern Greek tradition. She shows that the vintage as a performative context provides a large and varied repertoire of genres and songs (e.g. wedding songs and laments), which can therefore be performed in contexts other than work.<sup>38</sup> For instance, she argues that ‘songs on grape harvesting can be performed as laments, and laments can be performed at grape harvests’ (Karanika 2014: 126).<sup>39</sup> I believe that complementary considerations can also be made in relation to the *ioulos*-song tradition. To paraphrase Karanika, songs on harvesting/threshing could be performed as hymns to Demeter, and hymns to Demeter could be performed at harvest time. Hence, the performance of the *ioulos* song could be part of a solemn ceremony relating to the cult of Demeter. The event might consist in some harvesting/threshing festivities, in which the refrain expressed in *PMG* 849 would not be out of place, fit for both the work activity represented (as a threshing song) and the religious setting involved (as a hymn to Demeter).<sup>40</sup> A parallel can be

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<sup>38</sup> Cf. e.g. Karanika (2014: 127): ‘Vintage, then, becomes a platform rich with symbolism for the totality of life, which is reflected both in songs’ performances at vintage and in performances of vintage songs on other occasions.’

<sup>39</sup> This is likewise true of the Maniat laments, which in modern Greece are also used as feast-songs (e.g. in weddings and baptisms), pub songs (by men when drinking together) and work songs (by women grinding at the hand-mill). See Morgan 1973 (esp. pp. 268 and 296).

<sup>40</sup> In this regard, let us remember the famous Harvester Vase of Hagia Triada (Crete, c. 1500 BC), on which a group of harvesters, carrying long forked implements on their shoulders and accompanied by singing musicians, are depicted. This procession is supposed to be part of an agricultural-religious ceremony, in which agricultural-religious songs were presumably sung (see e.g. Forsdyke 1954; Robbins 1996: 969).

found in Callixeinus' report on the Dionysiac procession of Ptolemy II Philadelphus in Alexandria (279/8 BC?). Callixeinus (*FGrH* 627 F 2 *ap. Ath.* 5.199a) describes an enormous wagon carrying an equally huge wine press, in which sixty satyrs treaded out the grapes by singing a vintage song:

ἐξῆς εἴλκετο ἄλλη τετράκυκλος μῆκος πηχῶν εἴκοσι, πλάτος ἑκκαίδεκα, ὑπὸ ἀνδρῶν τριακοσίων, ἐφ' ἧς κατεσκεύαστο ληνὸς πηχῶν εἴκοσι τεσσάρων, πλάτος πεντεκαίδεκα, πλήρης σταφυλῆς. ἐπάτουν δὲ ἐξήκοντα σάτυροι πρὸς αὐλὸν ᾄδοντες μέλος ἐπιλήνιον, ἐφειστήκει δ' αὐτοῖς Σίληνός.

Another four-wheeled cart 20 cubits long and 16 cubits wide was pulled along immediately behind this one by 300 men. A wine-press 24 cubits high, 15 cubits wide and full of grapes had been constructed on top of it. 60 satyrs were trampling the grapes and singing a grape-pressing song to the accompaniment of pipes, and Silenus was supervising them.<sup>41</sup>

What is most salient for my argument is that work-related songs (in this case vintage songs) seemed to be well integrated into a Hellenistic official event, which at the same time staged agricultural activities related to a specific religious cult (that of Dionysus).<sup>42</sup> Likewise, *PMG* 849 may represent a work-related song that was also used and performed on the occasion of some agricultural festivals connected with the cult of Demeter. Another attestation of a religious-cum-work song, or at least an imitation of it, is the Lityerses song, which will be analysed below.

A second hypothesis resulting from the fluid nature of the *ioulos* song is that this genre could also be performed in work contexts other than threshing and/or reaping. The analysis of a fragment from the short epic *Hermes* by Eratosthenes of Cyrene – in which an everyday performance of the *ioulos* song is staged – will be helpful in clarifying this aspect. The passage of Eratosthenes' *Hermes* (fr. 10 Pow.) runs as follows:

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<sup>41</sup> Transl. Olson 2006: 461.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Kerényi 1976: 65-67. A later scholium on Clem. Al. *Protr.* 1.2.2 (Markovich ἀγροικικὴ ὥδῃ ἐπὶ τῷ ληνῷ ᾄδομένη, ἣ καὶ αὐτὴ περιεῖχεν τὸν Διονύσου σπαραγμόν) informs us that agricultural songs sung at the wine press involved the dismemberment of Dionysus. Wine-press songs (ἐπιληνίστιν ὕμνοις) are also described in *Anacreont.* 59 (cf. Mihăescu 1956: 110-112; Lambin 1992: 148; Lambin 2002: 245-247; Karanika 2014: 115f.).



ἡ χερνήτις ἔριθος ἐφ' ὕψηλοῦ πυλεῶνος  
δενδαλίδας τεύχουσα καλοῦς ἤειδεν ἰούλους.

The servant, sitting on a tall tower, was singing beautiful *ioulos* songs as she made barley cakes called *dendalides*.<sup>43</sup>

What is here described are ‘pretty’ ἰούλοι sung by a χερνήτις ἔριθος while baking a particular kind of barley-cake (δενδαλίδας).<sup>44</sup> There is uncertainty over the figure of the χερνήτις ἔριθος. By such a phrase, many scholars have meant a (hired) ‘spinster’ or ‘female weaver’.<sup>45</sup> Accordingly, in Eratosthenes’ fragment, the *iouloi* would correspond to that typology of work song which is also mentioned by Athenaeus (cf. *supra*) as the one performed by women while spinning or weaving wool. However, this view raises some issues for the understanding of the text.<sup>46</sup> Why would Eratosthenes have staged a female wool-worker intent not on her own ostensible activity, but on baking?<sup>47</sup> As a matter of fact, in their original meaning, both χερνήτις and (ἡ) ἔριθος are both to be understood in the generic sense of ‘maidservant’ or ‘female hired-worker’.<sup>48</sup> And in this original and more generic sense, some scholars have understood

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<sup>43</sup> Transl. Karanika 2014: 154.

<sup>44</sup> On this fragment, cf. recently Scanzo 2002: 42-44; Di Gregorio 2010: 121-126; Magnani 2014. Its narrative context is much debated and the function it has within the framework of Eratosthenes’ poem remains unclear. What is certain is that all *testimonia* are interested in the rare term ἰούλος and, only for this reason, fr. 10 Pow. is the most quoted fragment from Eratosthenes’ *Hermes*.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. e.g. Velsen 1853: 79; Färber 1936: 43; Edmonds 1940: 507, 533; Fitton 1975: 225. On these interpretations, cf. Di Gregorio 2010: 123 n. 390.

<sup>46</sup> See Di Gregorio 2010: 97 n. 174, 123-126; Magnani 2014: 123-128.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. e.g. Hiller 1872: 26 (‘Fortasse voce ἔριθος mulierem lanificam significavit [*scil.* Eratosthenes] [...]. Quamquam si haec eius sententia fuit permirum videtur, quod mulierem non inter ipsum lanificii laborem, sed alio opere occupatam iulos cecinisse narrat’); Fitton 1975: 224 (‘a hireling spinning-woman has no business making barley-cakes’); Grandolini 1999: 22 (‘dubbio circa il rapporto tra la filatrice di lana, la preparazione di focacce e l’esecuzione di iuli dedicati a Demetra’); Magnani 2014: 126 (‘per quale motivo Eratostene avrebbe scelto [...] una filatrice, intenta però non a filare, bensì a svolgere una mansione a lei solitamente estranea?’). Fitton (1975: 224) tries to solve the problem by amending δενδαλίδες with δαιδάλλει. This reading has been duly criticised, cf. Magnani 2014: 119 n. 17 and 120f. n. 23.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Magnani 2014: 124f. The terms χερνής and χερνήτης / χερνήτις properly mean a needy man or woman who is compelled to work for daily hire at other people’s homes; the feminine χερνήτις assumes the more specific meaning of ‘woman who spins (for daily hire)’ as early as *Il.* 12.433-435 ἀλλ’

the pleonastic collocation of the two synonyms in Eratosthenes' *Hermes*.<sup>49</sup> If the meaning of 'maidservant' is to be preferred to the over-specific 'weaver' in the interpretation of χερνήτις ἔριθος, the *ioulos* song depicted by Eratosthenes cannot be taken as a clear example of a spinning song.<sup>50</sup> What kind of song is the maidservant imagined to be singing as she bakes a dessert? Do these pretty *iouloi* have anything to do with *PMG* 849? Are they in any way connected to Demeter and to the *iouloi*-hymns devoted to her? The ancient discussion about this passage reveals a sharp distinction between the *ioulos* as a work song and the *ioulos* as a hymn to Demeter. This distinction led ancient scholars to take issue with Eratosthenes' descriptive choice:

*schol.* Ap. Rhod. 1.972a Wendel ἰουλος δὲ καλεῖται ἡ πρώτη ἐξάνθησις καὶ ἔκφυσις τῶν ἐν τῷ γενεῖω τριχῶν. ὁ μέντοι Ἑρατοσθένης ὄνομα ᾠδῆς ἐρίθων ἀπέδωκεν, ἐν τῷ Ἑρμῇ λέγων οὕτω· [fr. 10 Pow.]. οὐκ ἔστι δέ, φησὶ Δίδυμος (fr. 1.5.32 Schmidt), ἀλλ' ὕμνος εἰς Δήμητρα ὡς ὁ οὐπιγγοῦ παρὰ Τροϊζηνίοις εἰς Ἄρτεμιν. ἔστι γὰρ οὐλος καὶ ἰουλος ἢ ἐκ τῶν δραγμάτων συναγομένη δέσμη καὶ Οὐλῶ ἢ Δημήτηρ.

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ἔχον ὥς τε τάλαντα γυνὴ χερνήτις ἀληθῆς / ἢ τε σταθμὸν ἔχουσα καὶ εἴριον ἀμφὶς ἀνέλκει / ἰσάζουσ', ἵνα παισὶν ἀεικέα μισθὸν ἄρῃται. Likewise, ἔριθος originally designates a 'daily-labourer' or 'hired-servant', and only later – mostly in the Hellenistic period – does it come to be understood in the sense of 'workers in wool', 'weavers'. On the term ἔριθος, see also Neri 2016: 201.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. e.g. Hiller 1872: 26 ('Itaque veri similis est, ἔριθος potestate magis generali ab eo [*scil.* Eratosthene] usurpatum esse') and Di Gregorio 2010: 125 ('Ἐριθος e l'aggettivo χερνήτις saranno da intendere nel senso generico di operaia salariata'). Cf. also Di Gregorio 2010: 123 nn. 387 and 388, 125 n. 410. Magnani (2014: 126-128) develops this interpretation further and suggests – on the basis of Philitas fr. 17 Dettori Ἀχαιά· ἡ Δημήτηρ παρὰ Ἀττικοῖς [...] ἢ, ὡς Φιλῆτας, τὰς ἐρίθους ἀχαιὰς ἐκάλουν (cf. Dettori 2000: 127-129) – that the noun ἔριθος is here specifically related to the activity of baking. The χερνήτις ἔριθος would thus represent a hireling female baker. In addition, still on the basis of the gloss to Philitas, Magnani (2014: 131) proposes the conjecture χερνήτις ἀχαιά instead of χερνήτις ἔριθος.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. e.g. Lambin (1992: 141): 'On ne saurait donc s'appuyer sur ces vers d'Eratosthène pour faire de l'*oulos* la chanson de femmes qui cardent ou filent la laine'. Can we suppose that Tryphon's interpretation of the *ioulos* as a spinning song (quoted in Athenaeus, cf. *supra*) had drawn on a misinterpretation of Eratosthenes' fragment (χερνήτις ἔριθος in the sense of 'spinster'/'weaver')? If so, Tryphon would disagree with his master Didymus (cf. *infra*; see also Magnani 2014: 130). Hiller is sceptical (1872: 25): 'Reputanti mihi, quam infirma ac temeraria argumentatione veteres grammatici saepenumero usi sint, haud prorsus incredibile videtur, hanc explicationem solo Eratosthenis loco ortam esse, ubi ἔριθος ex consuetudine Homero recentiore idem quod ἐπιουργός significare putarent.'

The word *ioulos* is used to mean the first growth of the hair of the chin. Eratosthenes however, in the *Hermes*, makes it the name of a song sung by female workers: [fr. 10 Pow.]. But according to Didymus this is incorrect, and the *ioulos* is a hymn to Demeter like the Troezenian *oupingos* to Artemis. It seems that *oulos* or *ioulos* is the sheaf and *Oulo* is a name of Demeter.<sup>51</sup>

Here the scholiast is contrasting the view of *ioulos* as a work song, as found in Eratosthenes' fragment, and that of *ioulos* as a hymn to Demeter, a view ascribed to Didymus of Alexandria (first century BC).<sup>52</sup> Such a clear-cut distinction both recalls the narrow conceptualisation of 'work song proper' in modern literature (cf. §3.0), and, more specifically, reflects the *modus operandi* of ancient scholarship in classifying lyric poetry. On the one hand, the opposition 'hymn' vs. 'work song' retraces the broad distinction between religious and secular poetry which dates to at least the generation before Plato.<sup>53</sup> On the other hand, the Platonic approach fostered the pragmatic taxonomy of Alexandrian scholarship, a taxonomy that is in turn reflected in authors such as Didymus.<sup>54</sup> The Alexandrian classification of lyric poetry chiefly took into consideration the context of the songs' performance. In such a cataloguing system, every type of song belonged to a specific performative context. It followed that a hymn to Demeter such as the *ioulos* could not be sung by a maidservant, because it was supposed to be performed in a more official ritual context. However, we know that the practical interest of Alexandrian hymnic classification often resulted in artificial and

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<sup>51</sup> Transl. Edmonds 1940: 533 (slightly adapted).

<sup>52</sup> Whether the polemic against the use of the term ἰούλος made by Eratosthenes belongs to the scholiast himself – who would thus resort to the evidence of Didymus in order to support his thesis – or whether the entire polemic goes back to Didymus is unclear from the phrasing of the scholium. The other sources relating to Eratosthenes' fragment – *schol.* Ap. Rhod. 2.43 (here however, the words of the fragment are not quoted), *Etym. Magn.* 472.26-42 Gaisf., Tzetz. in Lycophr. 23 Scheer, Tzetz. *Chil.* 13.557-560 Leone (cf. comparanda) – do not refer to Didymus' alternative but present the *ioulos* as a particular kind of song, without any other specification.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. the distinction between hymns as songs in praise of gods and encomia for men in Pl. *Resp.* 10.607a. Cf. also Pl. *Leg.* 700b1-5.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. e.g. Didymus' treatise Περὶ λυρικῶν ποιητῶν. His fragment about the *ioulos* is, however, supposed to have been part of the Λέξις κωμική (fr. 1.5.32 Schmidt).

schematic distinctions which were not always comprehensive enough to cover all potential variations in the songs' performances.<sup>55</sup>

By accounting for the over-strict constraints of ancient classification, and after taking into consideration the multifaceted variety of the work-song genre, it is plausible to see in Eratosthenes' scene a maidservant who was singing some sorts of hymns to Demeter while baking a cake – in order to make her task more pleasant – as an *a fortiori* one if the obvious connection between baking and Demeter as the giver of food and grain is taken into account.<sup>56</sup> If we suppose that the *ioulos* song could also be performed within a religious ceremony (cf. *supra*), we can further argue that the maidservant staged by Eratosthenes might be performing some songs she had heard in some ritual and more official occasions.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, there is a possibility that the same words of *PMG* 849 were pronounced by the cake-baking maidservant as she was singing her *καλοὶ ἰούλοι*, which – as suggested by Karanika (2014: 154) – in Eratosthenes' fragment can denote an explicit reference to the *καλλίουλοι* mentioned in Semus (cf. *supra*). This view implies that the refrain sung by reapers could also be used, once detached from its original context, as a multi-purpose song sung on various occasions with various effects. In this sense, *PMG* 849 might have been perceived as a generic blessing formula: something like 'grant us prosperity'.<sup>58</sup> Eustathius too seems to

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<sup>55</sup> On the ancient classification of Greek lyric poetry, see e.g. Harvey 1955; Furley–Bremer 2001: 1.8-14; Carey 2009.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. *LSJ*<sup>9</sup> s.v. Δημήτηρ 2; *ThesCRA* 6.309 ('parfois même, le nom Déméter désigne à lui seul le blé ou le pain').

<sup>57</sup> Likewise, Webster (1970: 60) suggests that Eratosthenes would speak of a female harvester 'singing sheave-songs while she is making cakes to put on a high wreath (*pyleon*), but this is presumably a rehearsal for the song which will be sung when the wreath with its cakes are offered to Demeter'. However, against Webster's interpretation of *πυλεῶνος* as 'wreath', instead of 'gateway' (*πυλῶν*), cf. Di Gregorio 2010: 124.

<sup>58</sup> In this sense, the subject of the imperatival request might have no longer been the group of the harvesters but rather Demeter (cf. *supra*). Cf. also Cerrato (1885: 216): 'è supponibile che il formulare un desiderio, affinché il campo, sovente mendace, producesse larghi frutti, potesse partire da qualunque classe d'uomini, specie di quelli, i quali dal lavoro delle proprie mani traevano la vita. Perciò tanto la *χερνῆτις ἔριθος* di Eratostene, la quale *καλοὺς ἤειδεν ἰούλους*, quanto gli *ἐπιουργοί* di Ateneo potevano far echeggiare lo stesso canto, a quella stessa guisa che un fabbro può ripetersi nella sua officina una cantilena campestre, e una stessa ottava del Tasso cantarsi da campagnoli in Toscana e da gondolieri a Venezia.'

suggest a similar interpretative line, when he points out that the term οὔλον in the ‘tuneful’ refrain ‘should indicate not a bad omen, but rather something else auspicious, like what is safe and sound, well gathered or compacted together’.<sup>59</sup>

Notwithstanding the considerable level of speculation in this suggestion – given the scant textual information available – the considerations made so far take properly into account the complex and multifaceted performative reality of work songs. In the analysis of the *ioulos*-song tradition, we are not faced with a choice between work and religion. In fact, we can bring the two (thematic and performative) contexts together. The *ioulos* staged in Eratosthenes’ fragment and the *ioulos* as represented in *PMG* 849 were work songs that accompanied specific work activities (baking and threshing). Nevertheless, as supported by the strong associations of Demeter in both performative contexts, we cannot exclude that the *ioulos* song contained such elements that made it interpretable as a religious hymn as well.

The complex variety of songs sung at work seems to have been recognised even in antiquity. Just as in modern scholarship the narrow conceptualisation of ‘work song proper’ has been challenged in order to accommodate the extensive fluidity of the work-song tradition, in ancient scholarship we find not only a categorisation of work song based on rigid classifications (cf. *supra* ‘work song’ vs. ‘religious hymn’), but also more flexible views that implicitly confirm the broad repertoire of genres – e.g. laments and hymns – which were sung at work. A comparison with other work-related song traditions in ancient Greece can shed light on this conflation of genres and on the different modes of interchange across multiple performative contexts. Although the ancient sources deal with these kinds of texts mainly from a literary perspective, being interested in their etymologies and (mythical) aetiologies, the same sources may implicitly betray real-life experience of the variety and fluidity of work songs.

Let us start with a scholium to Theocritus’ *Idyll* 10, which is partially related to the *ioulos*-song tradition. Here the scholiast quotes a passage from Apollodorus of Athens (second century BC) in order to provide some information about the Lityerses song staged by Theocritus:

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<sup>59</sup> Cf. FONS II [...] καὶ ἐπιφώνημα ἐμμελὲς τὸ [PMG 849]. ἔνθα τὸ οὔλον οὔλον οὐκ ἂν εἶη δηλοῦν τὸ ὀλέθριον, ἀλλ’ ἕτερόν τι εὐφημότερον. τοιοῦτον δὲ τὸ ὄλον καὶ τὸ ὑγιὲς καὶ τὸ συνειλημμένον ἦτοι συνεστραμμένον.

*schol.*<sup>UEAT</sup> Theoc. 10.41/42d Wend. τοῦτον [*scil.* Λιτυέρσην] δέ φησιν Ἀπολλόδορος (*FGrH* 244 F 149) ὥδῃν εἶναι θεριστῶν λέγων οὔτω· καθάπερ ἐν μὲν θρήνοις Ἰάλεμος, ἐν δὲ ὕμνοις Ἰουλος, ἀφ’ ὧν καὶ τὰς ὥδᾶς αὐτὰς καλοῦσιν, οὔτω καὶ τῶν θεριστῶν ὥδῃ Λιτυέρσης.

Apollodorus claims that the Lityerses is a song of reapers: ‘as well as *Ialemos* is found in the laments, while in the hymns *Ioulos* – with the same kinds of songs being named after these two terms – the Lityerses is a song of reapers.’

In this passage, the Lityerses song, interpreted as a reaping song, is compared with the *ialemos* (a funeral song) and the *ioulos* (hymn to Demeter). All three songs seem to refer to a different divine and mythical figure, after whom each one is named. Nothing is known about Ἰουλος, except that he was somewhat related to Demeter. As stated by Semus and Didymus (cf. *supra*), similar terms (Ἰουλῶ and Οὐλῶ) were used as epithets of the goddess.<sup>60</sup> Hence, it can be assumed that one feature of the *ioulos* song will have been the recurrence of a refrain invoking Ἰουλος or Ἰουλῶ, in a similar way to the ritual cry ἦῃ or ἰὼ Παιάν for paeans. And just as in the paeans (Ford 2006: 287), in the *ioulos* song the refrain could represent ‘simultaneously a name for a particular kind of song, what one says in that song to evoke the god, and the proper name of the god the song invites to appear’.

Apollodorus’ testimony confirms the view of the *ioulos* as a hymn in honour of Demeter. Nevertheless, it may not be by chance that the *ioulos* song is discussed in conjunction with the Lityerses song (a reaping song). A closer look at the Lityerses song, as it is presented by Theocritus, will reveal the potential conflation of religious elements and work-related features within the same kind of text, just as we have suggested for *PMG* 849. Secondly, I shall show that the Lityerses song was part of a tradition of funeral lamentations which were sung at work by farmers.<sup>61</sup> Through this evidence I will reaffirm once again the fluidity of the work-song tradition as a whole.

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<sup>60</sup> For other epithets of Demeter involving the agricultural context and its products, cf. e.g. Σιτώ, Ἰμαλῖς, Μεγάλαρτος and Μεγαλόμαζος (Ath. 3.109b). See also *PMG* 847 (Ch. 4).

<sup>61</sup> Indirectly, even the *ialemos* is related to this tradition of lament songs sung at work. *Ialemos* is sometimes identified with Linos (cf. Palmisciano 2017: 94). The Linos song is another kind of lament associated with agricultural activities (cf. *infra*).

The name Λιτυέρσης indicated both a Phrygian culture-hero (cf. *infra*) and a reaping song named after him.<sup>62</sup> An extensive (hexameter) example of this song occurs in Theoc. *Id.* 10.41-55.<sup>63</sup> What Theocritus offers is without a doubt a literary reimagining of the agricultural folksong. This is evident in the way the text is introduced, as a song ‘ascribed to divine Lityerses’ (l. 41 θᾶσαι δὴ καὶ ταῦτα τὰ τῷ θεῷ Λιτυέρσῃ).<sup>64</sup> We can see the ‘author-function’ operating here (cf. §1.3.4): the name of Lityerses authenticates and authorises a textualised song integrated into a literary narrative.<sup>65</sup> The strong level of textualisation notwithstanding, we can still find in the Theocritean version some elements that reflect a sort of performative reality. Let us consider the opening verses of the address (ll. 42-45):

Δάματερ πολύκαρπε, πολύσταχυ, τοῦτο τὸ λᾶον  
 εὖεργόν τ’ εἶη καὶ κάρπιμον ὅττι μάλιστα.  
 σφίγγετ’, ἀμαλλοδέται, τὰ δράγματα, μὴ παριών τις  
 εἴπη ‘σύκινοι ἄνδρες· ἀπώλετο χοῦτος ὁ μισθός.’

Demeter, rich in fruit and rich in grain, grant that this crop be easily worked and as fruitful as possible. Binders, bind up the sheaves, lest someone pass and say, ‘Weak men, like the fig tree; the wage has been wasted’.<sup>66</sup>

What is striking here is the combination of a hymnic tone with a more specific *leitmotif* – i.e. exhortative formulae to workers – typical of both ancient and modern occupational songs. The Lityerses song starts with a prayer to Demeter for a bountiful harvest. Next the reapers are encouraged to do their job through an imperatival formula

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<sup>62</sup> Cf. also Ath. 14.619a ἡ δὲ τῶν θεριστῶν ᾠδὴ Λιτυέρσης καλεῖται.

<sup>63</sup> See Strano 1975-76; Lambin 1992: 135-137, 141f.; Pretagostini 2007: 73; Pretagostini 2009: 24-26; Cozzoli 2012: 309; Karanika 2014: 201-218; Lelli 2015: 28-39.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Gow 1952: 2.204 (‘Milos introduces his song as the composition of Lityerses, not as the song bearing his name, and the plural ταῦτα perhaps suggests that he thinks of each couplet separately as derived from Lityerses’); Hunter 1999: 211 (‘No other source ascribes traditional songs to him, but the idea is in keeping with the tendency to ascribe all institutions to single “inventors”’).

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Karanika (2014: 206): ‘The adjective *divine* is seen with names of poets such as Homer, the “divine man”.’

<sup>66</sup> Transl. Karanika 2014: 207.

which is very similar to the one found in *PMG* 849.<sup>67</sup> Although Theocritus' version of the Lityerses song may to some degree deviate from the actual tradition, it might still preserve in a general sense the cultural grammar by which work and religious song can intermingle.<sup>68</sup> In other words, once it is accepted that Theocritus' poetics belongs to a kind of 'realistic' fiction, it is not far-fetched to assume that even the *ioulos* song could feature, alongside elements strictly related to work, religious expression and invocations.<sup>69</sup>

Furthermore, the fluidity of work songs is an aspect that seems to be crucial for the whole narrative of *Idyll* 10. The core of the plot develops around a song-exchange between two reapers, Bucaeus performing a love song, and Milon, who sings the Lityerses song. The two characters and their respective songs thematise 'an opposition between two views of the countryside: a place of romantic fantasising [...], and a place of back-breaking labour' (Hunter 1999: 200). The contest is won by Milon, who, at the end of the *Idyll* (10.56-58), addresses Bucaeus and says that the Lityerses song is the one that reapers should sing to focus on work and not to deviate toward love:

ταῦτα χρὴ μοχθεῦντας ἐν ἀλίῳ ἄνδρας ἀεῖδεν,  
τὸν δὲ τεόν, Βουκαῖε, πρέπει λιμηρὸν ἔρωτα  
μυθίσδεν τᾷ ματρὶ κατ' εὐνὰν ὀρθρευοῖσα.

That's the stuff for men that work in the sun to sing. And as for your starveling love, Bucaeus – tell it to your mother when she stirs in bed of a morning.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Cf. Gow (1952: 2.204): 'the first couplet [*scil.* of the Lityerses song] might in fact pass for an expansion of the ἰουλος fragment.'

<sup>68</sup> Other literary representations of performative contexts in which work and cult songs seem to intermingle can be found in Hom. *Od.* 6.85-109 (cf. Adrados 2007: 50, 56; Karanika 2014: 52-67) and Eur. *Ion* 112-153 (cf. Pordomingo 1994: 325; 10.3.1 in Furley–Bremer 2001; Pace 2009; Karanika 2014: 146f.).

<sup>69</sup> On the Theocritean verses, cf. also Furley and Bremer (2001: 1.324): 'Work-songs provided both the entertainment to lighten the burden of monotonous and strenuous labour, and also gave a religious or mythical focus to the work: the labour was depicted as a kind of divine service which would please the deity concerned and secure his/her blessing in the form of a plentiful harvest or a successful piece of handcraft.'

<sup>70</sup> Transl. Gow 1952: 1.85. Cf. also *schol.*<sup>K</sup> Theoc. 10.56-58a Wend. ἔδει σε, φησὶν [*scil.* Μίλων], ὦ Βουκαῖε, μνημονεύοντα τοῦ θεοῦ Λιτυέρσου ἐπ' ἔργον τὸν νοῦν ἔχειν καὶ μὴ πρὸς ἔρωτα



Here, Milon seems to keep in mind a stylised concept of ‘work song proper’ that directly involves the workers and the specific work activity within which the song is performed. However, Milon himself had previously urged his friend Bucaeus to strike up a love song for his girl in order to work more happily (*Id.* 10. 21-23):

οὐ μέγα μυθεῖμαι· τὸ μόνον κατάβαλλε τὸ λᾶον,  
καί τι κόρας φιλικὸν μέλος ἀμβάλεν. ἄδιον οὕτως  
ἐργαζῆ. καὶ μὰν πρότερόν ποκα μουσικὸς ἦσθα.

I’m not talking big. You simply place the crop on the ground, and strike up a love song for the girl. You’ll work happier so; after all, you used to be a singer in the old days.<sup>71</sup>

In this case, Milon recognises the function of making work flow more pleasantly even in looser musical performances such as love songs. Theocritus’ *Idyll* 10 not only thematises two opposite views of the countryside but also contrasts two different approaches to work song. On the one hand, a narrow conceptualisation (‘work song proper’) is maintained, while on the other hand we see an approach which considers the great variety of genres embedded in the work-song tradition.

Finally, a broader comparative argument for the thematic and performative fluidity of the work song genre is provided by the analysis of some local traditions of funeral lamentations whose origins are generally traced back to singing cultures of farmers. The Lityerses song too is part of these traditions.<sup>72</sup> Although the performance scenarios of the various songs depicted are impossible to verify, the ancient scholars’ views reflect realistic perspectives that take into account the conflation of genres in the work-song tradition. In a passage from Pollux (4.54-55), a series of these regional varieties of lament songs sung at harvest time are discussed:

βώριμος δὲ Μαριανδύνων γεωργῶν ἄσμα, ὡς Αἰγυπτίων μανέρως, καὶ  
λιτυέρσας Φρυγῶν. ἀλλ’ Αἰγυπτίοις μὲν ὁ Μανέρως γεωργίας εὐρετής,

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(‘He says: “Bucaeus, you should keep your mind on your work and not deviate toward love, remembering and mentioning divine Lityerses”’, transl. Karanika 2014: 205).

<sup>71</sup> Transl. Karanika 2014: 205.

<sup>72</sup> On these song traditions – besides Lityerses, Maneros, Borimos/Mariandynos, and Linos – see Köster 1831: 16-28; Cerrato 1885: 306-314; Lambin 1992: 135-139, 143-148; Alexiou 2002: 55-60; Palmisciano 2003a: 87-98; Karanika 2014: 117-123, 127-132; Palmisciano 2017: 81-93.

Μουσῶν μαθητής, Λιτυέρσας δὲ Φρυζίν· οἱ δ' αὐτὸν Μίδου παῖδα εἶναι  
λέγουσιν, εἰς ἔριν δ' ἀμητοῦ προκαλούμενον μαστιγῶσαι τοὺς ἐνδιδόντας,  
βαιοτέρῳ δ' ἀμήτη περιπεσόντα αὐτὸν θάνατον παθεῖν. οἱ δ' Ἡρακλέα  
γεγενῆσθαι τὸν ἀποκτείναντα αὐτὸν λέγουσιν. ἦδετο δ' ὁ θρῆνος περὶ τὰς ἄλως  
κατὰ τὸ θέρος ἐπὶ Μίδου παραμυθία.

Borimos is a song of the Mariandynian farmers, like Maneros of the Egyptians and Lityerses of the Phrygians. But for the Egyptian, Maneros is the inventor of farming, a student of the Muses, as Lityerses was for the Phrygians. And they say that he was a son of Midas. After he challenged people to a reaping contest, he whipped those who gave in, but he died when he encountered a reaper stronger than he; they say that it was Heracles who killed him. And the lamentation was sung at harvest time in the summer as a consolation for Midas.<sup>73</sup>

Maneros is presented as both the Egyptian inventor of agriculture and a student of the Muses. At the same time, he is the eponymous hero of a song of farmers. The Maneros tradition is in turn compared with those of Borimos and Lityerses, in which the equivalent songs of the Mariandynian and the Phrygian farmers respectively occur.<sup>74</sup> More specifically, in the mythical account of the Phrygian hero Lityerses, the song is performed at harvest time as a lamentation commemorating his deeds. The Lityerses song, which has been analysed as a song sung by reapers, in which even religious/cult elements can be found (cf. *supra*), here also appears as a funeral lament.

The Linos can be added to this list of lament songs sung at work. The figure of Linos is often associated with agricultural rites, the inventions of music and a tradition of lamentation.<sup>75</sup> According to Herodotus (2.79), Linos was celebrated not only in Greek songs, but also elsewhere under different names. The Egyptian equivalent, for example, would be Maneros, the only son of the first king of Egypt, who was honoured

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<sup>73</sup> Transl. Karanika 2014: 128 and 214.

<sup>74</sup> Borimos is Bormos (βῶρμος) in Nymphis Historicus *FGrH* 432 F 5b (*ap.* Ath. 14.619f-620a). In Callistratus Historicus *FGrH* 433 F 3 (*ap. schol.*<sup>M</sup> Aesch. *Pers.* 938), Bormos is just a brother to Mariandynos, to whom lament songs are dedicated, such as the refrain *carm. pop.* 878 *PMG* (see Neri 2003: 242-245). On these two different traditions, cf. Palmisciano 2017: 84.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. e.g. Hes. fr. 305.2-4 M.-W., Pind. fr. 56.4-10 Cannatà Fera, Hdt. 2.79, Conon *FGrH* 26 F 1.19, Paus. 2.19.7, 9.27.7, *schol.* Hom. *Il.* 18.570 Erbse.

with laments after his death.<sup>76</sup> Although Herodotus's view of other cultures is very much anchored to Greek concerns of self-definition, the way he connects Linos to agricultural figures from other cultures tells us that – regardless of the realities of Maneros and Lityerses in their Egyptian and Phrygian contexts – Linos is linked to both agricultural themes and lamentation. Therefore, if Maneros is seen as the Egyptian equivalent of both Linos and (as seen above) the Phrygian Lityerses, the Linos and Lityerses songs can also be compared with each other as funeral lamentations performed by farmers during their work activities. In the Homeric depiction of Achilles' shield (*Il.* 18.561-572), the Linos song appears to be performed by a young boy to the accompaniment of the lyre at grape harvest.<sup>77</sup> More significantly, in another passage of Pollux (1.38), the Linos and Lityerses songs are paired together as farming songs:

ὥδαι εἰς θεοὺς κοινῶς μὲν παιᾶνες, ὕμνοι, ἰδίως δὲ Ἀρτέμιδος ὕμνος οὐπιγγος, Ἀπόλλωνος ὁ παιάν, ἀμφοτέρων προσόδια, Διονύσου διθύραμβος, **Δήμητρος ἰουλος· λίνος γὰρ καὶ λιτυέρσης σκαπανέων ὥδαι καὶ γεωργῶν.**

Songs to the gods are called in general paeans or hymns, in particular a hymn to Artemis is known as *oupingos*, to Apollo as the paeon. Both these are

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<sup>76</sup> Hdt. 2.79 τοῖσι [*scil.* Αἰγυπτίοις] ἄλλα τε ἐπάξια ἐστὶ νόμιμα, καὶ δὴ καὶ ἄεισμα ἓν ἐστὶ, Λίνος, ὅσπερ ἓν τε Φοινίκη ἀοίδιμος ἐστὶ καὶ ἐν Κύπρῳ καὶ ἄλλῃ, κατὰ μέντοι ἔθνεα οὖνομα ἔχει, συμφέρεται δὲ ὡτὸς εἶναι τὸν οἱ Ἕλληνες Λίνον ὀνομάζοντες ἀεῖδουσι, ὥστε πολλὰ μὲν καὶ ἄλλα ἀποθωμάζειν με τῶν περὶ Αἴγυπτον ἐόντων, ἐν δὲ δὴ καὶ τὸν Λίνον ὀκόθεν ἔλαβον τὸ οὖνομα· φαίνονται δὲ αἰεὶ κοτε τοῦτον ἀεῖδοντες. ἔστι δὲ Αἰγυπτιστὶ ὁ Λίνος καλεῖσθαι Μανερῶς. ἔφασαν δὲ μιν Αἰγύπτῳ τοῦ πρώτου βασιλεύσαντος Αἰγύπτου παῖδα μουνογενέα γενέσθαι, ἀποθανόντα δὲ αὐτὸν ἄνωρον θρήνοισι τούτοις ὑπὸ Αἰγυπτίων τιμηθῆναι, καὶ ἀοιδὴν τε ταύτην πρώτην καὶ μούνην σφίσι γενέσθαι.

<sup>77</sup> Hom. *Il.* 18.569-571 τοῖσιν δ' ἐν μέσσοισι πάϊς φόρμιγγι λιγείῃ / ἱμερόεν κιθάριζε, λίνον δ' ὑπὸ καλὸν ἄειδε / λεπταλή φωνῇ κτλ. The scholia also transmit two slightly different versions of a song in honour of Linos, one of uncertain metre (*carm. pop.* 880 *PMG* = *schol.* b Hom. *Il.* 18.570d<sup>2</sup> Erbse) and the other one in hexameters (*IGM* 18 = *schol.* T Hom. *Il.* 18.570c<sup>1</sup>). On these texts, cf. recently Palmisciano 2017: 90-92. These two texts seem to be literary compositions on the mythical figure of Linos, more than actual examples of work/lament songs. Cf. e.g. Neri (2003: 249): 'tutto ciò fa pensare che il lamento per Lino fosse in esametri e che la versione (metricamente incerta) dello scolio b, accolta nel testo (sia pure tra croci) da Page e Campbell, sia probabilmente un rifacimento tardo (in tal caso da eliminare dalla raccolta dei *carmina popularia* melici).

addressed in processional songs, Dionysus in the dithyramb, Demeter in the *ioulos*. The Linos and Lityerses are the songs of delvers and farmers.<sup>78</sup>

It is worth noticing that the two songs are quoted immediately after the mention of the *ioulos* song, which is classified as a hymn to Demeter. This association might be pure chance. But it cannot be excluded that, on Pollux's line of reasoning, the hymnic *ioulos* was somehow connected to agricultural songs as well, such as the Linos and the Lityerses.<sup>79</sup> The comparative analysis delineated above gives further support to the notion of a fluid nature in the *ioulos*-song tradition and, more specifically, in *PMG* 849. The *ioulos* as a song type wavers between being a work song proper and a hymn to Demeter.

### 3.2 The integration of *PMG* 869 into symposium literature

EDD *Carm. pop.* 23 Neri = 869 Campbell = *PMG* 869 = 26 Edmonds = 30 Diehl = 24 Smyth = 43 Bergk<sup>4,3</sup> = 31 Bergk<sup>2</sup> = 19 Bergk<sup>1</sup> = 34 Schneidewin.

FONS Plut. *Conv. sept. sap.* 14.157d-e ὁ μὲν Θαλῆς ἐπισκώπτων εὖ φρονεῖν ἔφη τὸν Ἐπιμενίδην ὅτι μὴ βούλεται πράγματα ἔχειν ἀλῶν τὰ σιτία καὶ πέττων ἑαυτῷ, καθάπερ Πιττακός. ἐγὼ γάρ, εἶπε, τῆς ξένης ἤκουον ἁδοῦσης πρὸς τὴν μύλην ἐν Ἐρέσῳ γεγόμενος·

ἄλει μύλα ἄλει·  
καὶ γὰρ Πιττακὸς ἀλεῖ  
μεγάλας Μιτυλήνας βασιλεύων.

Numeri incerti: cf. Ritschl 1842: 301f.; Hermann 1844: 220f.; Bergk 1882: 672f. (cf. 1866: 1312); Cerrato 1885: 315f.; Wilamowitz 1890: 227; Smyth 1900: 160, 511; Wilamowitz 1921: 400f.; Webster 1970: 61; Campbell 1982: 132, 448; West, *GM* 147; Cole 1988: 100 n. 105, 179 n. 229; Gentili-Lomiento 2003: 203; Magnani 2013: 60 n. 74, 61; Pavese 2014: 131; Budelmann 2018: 263.

Codd.: PQJB<sup>i</sup>.

|| 1 ἄ. μύλ' ἄ. Edmonds, dub. Page || 2 Φίττακος Edmonds | ἀλεῖ codd., Ducas, Wytttenbach, Bergk<sup>1</sup>, Defradas, Lo Cascio : ἄλει post Köster edd. pl. || 3 Μιτυλήνας fere codd. : Μιτυλάνας PQ, Schneidewin, Bergk, Smyth : Πιτυλάνας J : Μυτηλάνας B : Μυτιλάνας Bernardakis, rec. Paton, Babbitt : Μυτιλήνας

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<sup>78</sup> Transl. Edmonds 1940: 489 (slightly adapted).

<sup>79</sup> Cf. also Poll. 4.53, where the mention of the ἰουλοὶ is followed by the mention of lament songs (ἰάλεμοι, corr. Jungermann from οὐλαμοί), other cult songs (οὔπιγγοι in honour to Artemis), the λίνος and the milling song (ἐπιμύλιος). In the next sections, Pollux describes the Borimos, the Maneros and the Lityerses song traditions (cf. *supra*).

Wilamowitz<sup>2</sup> (cf. Wilamowitz 1890: 227), rec. Diehl, Page, Campbell, Neri, Budelmann : πόλιος Edmonds || 2-3 καὶ γὰρ βασ. / μεγ. Μυτιλήνας / Π. ἄ. Wilamowitz<sup>2</sup>.

Cf. Ael. *VH* 7.4 Ὅτι Πιττακὸς πάνυ σφοδρῶς ἐπῆναι τὴν μύλην, τὸ ἐγκώμιον αὐτῆς ἐκεῖνο ἐπιλέγων, ὅτι ἐν μικρῷ τόπῳ διαφόρως ἔστι γυμνάσασθαι. ἦν δέ τι ἄσμα ἐπιμύλιον οὕτω καλούμενον, Diog. Laert. 1.81 τοῦτω (*scil.* Πιττακῷ) γυμνάσιον σῖτον ἀλεῖν, ὥς φησι Κλέαρχος ὁ φιλόσοφος (fr. 71 Wehrli), Clem. Al. *Paed.* 3.10.50.2 ὁ Πιττακὸς ἐκεῖνος [...] ἤλθεεν ὁ Μιτυληναίων βασιλεὺς ἐνεργῶ γυμνασίῳ χρώμενος, Isid. Pelus. *Ep.* 1.470 (*PG* 78.440b) ὁ Μιτυληναῖος δὲ Πιττακός, καίτοι Βασιλεὺς ὢν, τὸν μύλωνα ἠντούργει, καὶ ἐνεργῶς γυμναζόμενος, καὶ τὴν τροφὴν ἐργαζόμενος.

Grind, mill, grind!

Pittacus grinds too,

king over great Mytilene!

In what follows, my analysis of *PMG* 869 will give attention especially to the immediate literary context in which the text is transmitted, i.e. Plutarch's *Convivium Septem Sapientium*. This aspect has often been overlooked in modern scholarship, which has mainly treated *PMG* 869 from the perspective of its original performative reality – as a song sung by women grinding wheat or barley.<sup>80</sup> I shall explore the extent to which *PMG* 869 has been incorporated into the symposium literature and in what sense this text has become, within such a literary context, something more than a work song. My analysis will then lead to reflect upon the fluidity of *PMG* 869, as a text that could be 'declined' differently in different contexts.

In the fictional dialogue of Plutarch's *Convivium Septem Sapientium* (14.157d-e), the philosopher Thales recalls a visit to Eresus, where he had heard his hostess singing *PMG* 869 over her hand-mill.<sup>81</sup> The grinding-song tradition is well-established

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<sup>80</sup> On *PMG* 869, see e.g. Cerrato 1885: 314-316; Wilamowitz 1890: 225-227; Blumenthal 1940: 125-127; Pordomingo 1991: 221f.; Lambin 1992: 170f.; Neri 2003: 228f.; Magnani 2013: 60f.; Karanika 2014: 144-153.

<sup>81</sup> As regards the original composition of the song, the only sure datum available is the terminus post quem of Pittacus of Mytilene (quoted in the text). However, it cannot be taken for granted either that *PMG* 869 circulated as early as the times of the Seven Sages (seventh/sixth century BC) or that it came from Lesbos (cf. Lambin 1992: 170). In light of this uncertainty, I adopt a conservative approach in constituting the text, aiming not to reconstruct the original linguistic shape of a hypothetical archaic and Lesbian song – cf. e.g. the readings ἄλη, Μυτιλήνας and Φίττακος (see Wilamowitz 1890: 227; Smyth 1900: 511; Edmonds 1940: 532) – but, more realistically, to edit the text that was adopted by Plutarch and read by his readers (a similar approach is used for *PMG* 848, §2.1). For this reason, I prefer

in antiquity (cf. §3.0), but the lyrics of *PMG* 869 quoted in the Plutarchan passage represent the only extant textual evidence of this tradition. *PMG* 869 is composed of a rhythmic address to the work tool (ἄλει μύλα ἄλει),<sup>82</sup> followed by a brief narrative about the figure of Pittacus (early sixth century BC), tyrant of Mytilene and considered one of the Seven Sages of ancient Greece. The exhortation to the millstone appears to be a recurring refrain of grinding songs, especially if we observe that similar formulae still occur (with slight variations) in the Modern Greek tradition. An example of the latter is found in the song from Mani (southern Peloponnese), which features a nearly identical opening refrain but a different narrative part:

Ἄλεθε, μύλο μου, ἄλεθε,  
βγάλε τ' αλεύρια σου ψιλά,  
τα πίτουρα σου τραγανά  
να τρώσι οι χωροφύλατσοι  
κι ο νωματάρχης το στυλὶ  
που κάθεται στην αγκωνή.

Grind, my millstone, grind, make your flour thin and soft, and your bran crusty,  
for the policemen to eat, and their officer, the dog, who sits in the corner.<sup>83</sup>

In ancient Greek literature, analogous addresses to inanimate objects can also be found, for example, in Sapph. fr. 118 V. ἄγι δὴ χέλυ δῖα ἴμοι λέγε† / φωνάεσσα ἴδε γίνεο† (‘Come, divine lyre, speak to me and find yourself a voice’) and Bacchyl. fr. 20B.1-2 M. ὦ βάρβιτε, μηκέτι πάσσαλον φυλάσ[σων] / ἐπτάτονον λ[ι]γυρὰν κάππαυε γᾶρυν (‘My lyre, no longer clinging to your peg, silence your clear voice with its seven notes’).<sup>84</sup> Sappho and Bacchylides address their own musical instruments and in

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to print ἀλεῖ (l. 2, cf. *infra* n. 109) and Μιτυλήνας (l. 3). The form Μιτυλήνη(/-α) had started to spread since approximately 300 BC and duly became the predominant form in Medieval manuscripts (cf. Herbst 1935: 1411f.).

<sup>82</sup> The first verse of *PMG* 869 may be interpreted as an iambic reizianum (aqwqu), with synizesis between -λα and ἄ- (cf. Gentili-Lomiento 2003: 203 and Pavese 2014: 131). On the iambic reizianum, cf. also Martinelli 1995: 256.

<sup>83</sup> Transl. Karanika 2014: 157 (cf. also Politis 1914: 241). See also the modern refrain ἄλεσε, μύλε μ', ἄλεσε σιτάρην καὶ κριθάρην ‘grind, my mill, grind wheat and barley’ (cf. Beaton 1980: 147 with further references).

<sup>84</sup> Transl. respectively Campbell 1982a: 141 and Campbell 1992: 277 (slightly adapted).

Sappho we notice the same structure of repetition ‘imperative-vocative-imperative’ as the one in *PMG* 869. Karanika (2014: 148) suggests that ‘folk songs’ such as *PMG* 869 ‘are the antecedents of such invocations’ and that *PMG* 869 as a ‘folk song is the least complex in form, since it is more closely tied to actual practice and is performed while a work task is being carried out’.<sup>85</sup> Karanika’s view on this particular issue reflects the very conceptualisation of folksong I have been trying to call into question, namely one based on preconceived contexts of origin and composition, and according to which *PMG* 869 would represent a primitive, pre-literary form of lyric with unsophisticated traits.<sup>86</sup> In my opinion, the intrinsic formal properties of *PMG* 869 do not *per se* make this text a folk song. Rather, they may help to understand the modalities of use and perception that define *PMG* 869 as a folk (and work) song. The grinding song about Pittacus can be considered a folk song because (when performed at the millstone) it was mainly used and perceived from an occasional-functional perspective. On the one hand, the iambic refrain (ᾄλει μύλα ᾄλει) acted as a rhythmical aid to the manual labour, while on the other, the anecdote about Pittacus distracted the singer from the tedious monotony of her job. This perspective does not exclude the possibility that the aesthetic and expressive potential of *PMG* 869 could be used differently in contexts other than work. More than being direct antecedents of ‘high’ lyric poetry, it would be correct to say that work songs perhaps shared the same traits that are expected in other forms of invocations and prayers – e.g. magical refrains and spells<sup>87</sup> – and that ancient poets occasionally borrowed and upgraded into the literary tradition. Once again, the point is not to draw a sharp line of demarcation between ‘literary’ and ‘non-literary’, but to explore how even everyday singing performances may be apt for literary contexts.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Cf. also Kirkwood (1974: 15f.), who, after quoting *PMG* 869, assumes that ‘ancestors of these songs influenced the development of more formal lyric poetry’.

<sup>86</sup> Similar preconceptions that saw the grinding songs and other work songs as old-fashioned and unsophisticated had also occurred in antiquity: cf. the discussion above on the Aristophanic passages (§3.0).

<sup>87</sup> As suggested by Karanika (2014: 145), the imperatival structure and the personified object as the addressee in the refrain of *PMG* 869 recall magical rituals and spells: ‘the song [*scil.* *PMG* 869] does not simply alleviate the monotony of a routine task; its linguistic features suggest that it is also uttered as a spell.’ Likewise, Leeuw (1963: 115-117) regards work songs as religious and magic instruments, which exert their power through the rhythm, citing as an example *PMG* 869.

<sup>88</sup> On this point, cf. also *PMG* 848 (§2.1).

A meaningful comparison can be drawn with Theocritus' *Idyll* 2, where the protagonist Simaetha decides to resort to magic to regain her lover's attentions. The incantation proper (ll. 17-63) is composed of nine quatrains, each one accompanied by a refrain which contains an exhortation to Simaetha's magical instrument: ἵνυξ, ἔλκε τὸ τῆνον ἐμὸν ποτὶ δῶμα τὸν ἄνδρα ('magic wheel, draw that man to my house'). The repetition of the refrain, along with other traits of the whole spell, are likely to belong to real-life experience, which Theocritus has however adapted for his own literary purposes.<sup>89</sup> The *inyx*-refrain is a part of everyday magical ritual, but in Theocritus' poetics it becomes something more by being integrated into its literary context. As argued by Duncan (2001: 48), 'Simaetha thus uses the *inyx* at several levels: at the literal, to cast her spell; on the literary, to allude to other poets and enchantresses; and on the figurative, to accompany her song with music, as a poet accompanies himself with a lyre'. These considerations raise questions about *PMG* 869: what does this text represent in the Plutarchan passage? As well as the second *Idyll*'s stress on the potential adaptability of a ritual refrain into a literary context, Plutarch's use of *PMG* 869 shows that even an everyday work song can be 'declined' into the narrative of the symposium literature. With this in mind, the moment has come to analyse in further detail the literary context in which *PMG* 869 is transmitted and to ask what specific function the text in question carries out within it.

Plutarch's *Convivium Septem Sapientium* is related to the body of stories, anecdotes, sayings and beliefs about seven eminent figures of Greek history.<sup>90</sup> The legend of the Seven Sages probably developed out of an oral tradition<sup>91</sup> by the sixth/fifth century BC (presumably in a Delphic context). The mythological material – while continuing to circulate orally – was then institutionalised, (re)-interpreted and reused by different literary sources in different epochs until the Byzantine era. This is

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<sup>89</sup> See the analysis of Duncan 2001. On Simaetha's incantation as real-life material, cf. *ibid.* p. 52 n. 50 (with further bibliography).

<sup>90</sup> The number is fixed but their names change. On the myth of the Seven Sages, its origins, developments and interpretations, cf. Santoni 1983; García Gual 1989; Martin 1993; Christes 2001; Busine 2002.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Busine (2002: 30): 'Quant à la question de l'origine orale de la légende, les spécialistes insistent précisément sur le fait que les paroles de sagesse attribuées aux Sages circulaient initialement sous une forme orale.' Throughout its transmission, both orality and writing played a significant role and were often complementary.



exactly the process we see in Plutarch here. The Greek author is exploiting one of the episodes about the Seven Wise Men that describes them as gathered at a symposium. His work is not only tied to a well-established literary genre called ‘symposium literature’,<sup>92</sup> but also relies upon a previous erudite tradition concerning exactly such gatherings of the Sages.<sup>93</sup> Within such a tradition, the Seven Sages not only symbolised, but also performed, the notion of wisdom. According to Martin (1993: 124), the Sages can be considered as ‘public, political, poetic performers’ of wisdom, who operated agonistically before a critical and competitive audience and whose representative

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<sup>92</sup> ‘Literature which purported to record what happened at specific *symposia*, real or imaginary’ (Mossman 1997: 120). See e.g. the *Symposium* of Plato and Xenophon, Plutarch’s *Table Talk* and Athenaeus. On the ‘symposium literature’, cf. Martin 1931; Gallardo 1972; Gera 1993: 132-154; Rutherford 1995a: 179-181; Mossman 1997: 119-121; König 2012. On the role of the symposium in Plutarch’s works, cf. e.g. Gallardo 1972; Pordomingo 1999; Vetta 2000; Ribeiro Ferreira-Leão-Tröster-Barata Dias 2009; Klotz-Oikonomopoulou 2011; König 2012: 60-89. On Plutarch’s *Banquet of the Seven Sages*, see e.g. Wilamowitz 1890; Snell 1954; Gallardo 1972: 174-188; Defradas 1985: 169-195; Adrados 1996; Jedrkiewicz 1997; Lo Cascio 1997: 7-88; Mossman 1997; Vetta 2000: 226-229; Busine 2002: 91-102; Demarais 2005; Leão 2005; González Equihua 2009; Kim 2009; Vela Tejada 2009; Vicente Sánchez 2009.

<sup>93</sup> Evidence on the literary tradition of the sympotic gatherings of the Seven Sages may be found, for instance, in Pl. *Prt.* 343a-b τούτων ἦν καὶ Θαλῆς ὁ Μιλήσιος καὶ Πιττακὸς ὁ Μυτιληναῖος καὶ Βίας ὁ Πριηνεὺς καὶ Σόλων ὁ ἡμέτερος καὶ Κλεόβουλος ὁ Λίνδιος καὶ Μύσων ὁ Χινηεύς, καὶ ἑβδομος ἐν τούτοις ἐλέγετο Λακεδαιμόνιος Χίλων [...] οὗτοι καὶ κοινῇ συνελθόντες ἀπαρχὴν τῆς σοφίας ἀνέθεσαν τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι εἰς τὸν νεῶν τὸν ἐν Δελφοῖς κτλ., Diog Laert. 1.40 Ἀρχέτιμος δὲ ὁ Συρακούσιος (*FGrH* 1098 F 1) ὁμιλίαν αὐτῶν [*scil.* τῶν ἐπὶ σοφῶν] ἀναγράφει παρὰ Κυψέλω, ἣ καὶ αὐτὸς φησι παρατυχεῖν· Ἐφορος δὲ παρὰ Κροίσῳ πλὴν Θαλοῦ (*FGrH* 70 F 181). φασὶ δὲ τινες καὶ ἐν Πανιώνίῳ καὶ ἐν Κορίνθῳ καὶ ἐν Δελφοῖς συνελθεῖν αὐτούς. See Martin 1993: 123 (‘The “sympotic” strain in the stories of the Seven Sages (as in the tale of their banqueting together) would not, then, be a recent invention, but a relic of a much older context. This is to say, the setting in Plutarch’s *Banquet of the Seven Sages* may be an expression of a continuing tradition, not just Plutarch’s innovation’) and n. 59; Adrados 1996: 130 (‘Parece, pues, que el *Banquete de los Siete Sabios* es la reducción al esquema socrático-platónico del género “Banquete”, modificado por Menipo y sus continuadores y luego por Plutarco, del material legendario de un banquete de los siete sabios’); Jedrkiewicz 1997: 11 (‘Sembra quindi che esistessero alter versioni dell’incontro conviviale di questo collegio arcaico, del resto leggendario ed incerto fin nella sua composizione’) and 12 n. 1; Mossman 1997: 121; Busine 2002: 94 (‘En dépit du fait que nous n’avons conservé, avant Plutarque, que peu de témoignages explicites de la tradition qui faisaient se réunir les Sept Sages autour d’un banquet commun, le *Banquet des Sept Sages* semble se poser comme l’héritier de ces multiples traditions, tout en désirant les rectifier’) and n. 7.

features comprised, among others, practical skills and a ‘unique and pungent eloquence’. It is not by chance that a number of sources portrayed the Seven Sages as poets.<sup>94</sup> In particular, some of them were identified as the authors of a group of *skolia* or drinking songs,<sup>95</sup> probably fake songs, which received their authority from such an attribution.<sup>96</sup> Plutarch’s *Convivium* is linked to this view of the Sages as performers of wisdom, practical skills and literature, but through a different, innovative approach.

At the banquet staged by Plutarch, the Sages do not perform the archaic wisdom themselves, but attend as an audience to the telling of their own deeds, expressed by their peers.<sup>97</sup> However, in the quotation of *PMG* 869, the matter is much more complex. It is not just about Thales reporting a *χρεία*<sup>98</sup> about Pittacus, as he does elsewhere in the text.<sup>99</sup> Rather, this *χρεία* of Pittacus’ grinding is, in its turn, embedded in a work song originally sung by a woman over her hand-mill. The practical learning of Pittacus is depicted through a song heard in Lesbos and then re-performed at a symposium by

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<sup>94</sup> See Martin 1993: 113-115.

<sup>95</sup> On the *skolia* attributed to the Seven Sages, cf. Pellizer-Tedeschi 1991.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. e.g. Pellizer (1991: 188): ‘L’impressione che abbiamo tratto dall’analisi di questi scolî e dall’esame del contesto lessicale e stilistico che si ricava da un ampio spoglio di *loci similes* conferma piuttosto, e con molta evidenza, l’opinione del Wilamowitz (1925), che si tratti non già di frammenti di una improbabile produzione melica attribuibile ai Sette Sapienti, ma di un discreto *specimen* di canzoni conviviali di non spregevole fattura, che circolavano ed erano cantate nei simposî; la loro attribuzione, evidentemente pseudoepigrafa, ai Sette Savî, dovette a nostro avviso avere la funzione di conferire loro maggiore autorità, attraverso la garanzia e il prestigio di nomi illustri e a tutti noti.’

<sup>97</sup> On these ‘problems with performance’ in Plutarch’s *Convivium Septem Sapientium*, cf. more generally Kim 2009: 485-487.

<sup>98</sup> On the term *χρεία* ‘as a suitable collective term for different types of sayings and anecdotes’, cf. Kindstrand 1986: 223f. According to the method of *Quellenforschung* (cf. e.g. Lo Cascio 1997: 12; Adrados 1996), collections and anthologies of *χρεῖαι*, anecdotes and sayings – involving the specific tradition of the Seven Sages or not – represent the main kind of source used by Plutarch in the *Convivium Septem Sapientium*. Some scholars have argued for a scholastic background of most *χρεῖαι* embedded in the Plutarchan dialogue, that is to say, *χρεῖαι* previously included in *progymnasmata*. Cf. e.g. Vicente Sánchez 2009 and González Equihua 2009. In general, on the influence of the schools of rhetoric in Plutarch, cf. Pordomingo 2005 and Díaz Lavado 2010: 59-71.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. e.g. Plut. *Conv. sept. sap.* 2.147b ἀλλὰ τοῦτο μὲν εἶπεν ὁ Θαλῆς ‘Πιττακοῦ ἐστὶν εἰρημένον ἐν παιδίᾳ ποτε πρὸς Μυρσίλον’, 147c καὶ Πιττακὸς οὗτος εἰ μοναρχία μὴ προσῆλθεν, οὐκ ἂν εἶπεν ὡς ‘χαλεπὸν ἐσθλὸν ἔμμεναι’. On the figure of Pittacus of Mytilene in Plutarch’s *Convivium Septem Sapientium*, cf. Leão 2009: 512-515 (in particular, cf. n. 8).

Thales, with Pittacus himself among the audience. A closer look at the narrative sequence in which *PMG* 869 is quoted will show how this text fully complies with the purpose of the whole work.

The focus of the sympotic discussion moves from the good government of the State to household management (151d-155e), and from this to the practice of drinking and the acquisition of an adequate measure of property (155e-157c). On this last point, Cleobulus concludes by stressing the function of the νόμος, which assigns to each one of the wise men ‘so much as is fitting, reasonable and suitable’. Likewise the physician Cleodorus, using reason as his law for the prescriptions, does not ‘apportion an equal amount to each one, but the proper amount in all cases’.<sup>100</sup> Another banqueter, Ardalus, joins in the discussion and jokingly wonders what kind of νόμος would compel Epimenides<sup>101</sup> to abstain from proper food and instead eat a bizarre concoction banishing hunger.<sup>102</sup> At this stage, Thales pejoratively scoffs at (ἐπισκώπτων) the ‘good sense’ of Epimenides in not wishing to have the trouble of cooking for himself and Pittacus’ opposite habit of grinding food on his own, as is attested by the song he had heard in Lesbos (157d-e):

This remark arrested the attention of the whole company, and Thales said jestingly that Epimenides showed good sense in not wishing to take the trouble of grinding his grain and cooking for himself like Pittacus. ‘For,’ he said, ‘when I was at Eresus, I heard the woman at whose house I stayed singing at the mill: [*PMG* 869]’.<sup>103</sup>

What follows in the dialogue are more serious arguments for and against the necessity of nutrition for human beings and which are expressed, not by chance, in a more oratorical style by (especially) Cleodorus and Solon (157e-160c).<sup>104</sup>

Two key points can be picked out. Firstly, the quotation of *PMG* 869

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<sup>100</sup> Transl. Babbitt 1928: 157

<sup>101</sup> Epimenides of Cnossos was a seventh/sixth-century Greek seer and philosopher-poet. Sometimes he appears to be included in the lists of the Seven Sages (cf. *infra* n. 105).

<sup>102</sup> Plut. *Conv. sept. sap.* 14.157d ὑπολαβὼν δ’ ὁ Ἄρδαλος, ᾗρ’ οὖν, ἔφη, ‘καὶ τὸν ἐταῖρον ὑμῶν Σόλωνος δὲ ξένον Ἐπιμενίδην νόμος τις ἀπέχεσθαι τῶν ἄλλων σιτίων κελεύει, τῆς δ’ ἀλίμου δυνάμεως ἦν αὐτὸς συντίθησι μικρὸν εἰς τὸ στόμα λαμβάνοντα διημερεῦειν ἀνάριστον καὶ ἄδειπνον;’

<sup>103</sup> Transl. Babbitt 1928: 157. For the Greek text, cf. apparatus.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Lo Cascio 1997: 10, 26.

exemplifies, as do other *χρεῖαι* and anecdotes embedded in the dialogue, an aspect of practical learning attributed to one of the Seven Sages (i.e. Pittacus), as opposed to the lack of wisdom ironically featured in the depiction of Epimenides.<sup>105</sup> The anecdote of Pittacus grinding expressed by *PMG* 869 corresponds to the paradigmatic value the Seven Sages represented in ancient Greek ethical and moral thought, namely *παιδεία*. Secondly, this function is expressed by *PMG* 869 in a serious but also a comic way. As a matter of fact, the anecdotes about Epimenides and Pittacus act as a witty introduction to the serious sympotic subject of food. This mixture of laughter and seriousness is not only a feature of the literary genre of the symposium already by the time of Xenophon,<sup>106</sup> but is also central to Plutarch's *Convivium Septem Sapientium*.<sup>107</sup> Jedrkiewicz (1997), for instance, interprets this treatise in terms of seriocomic literature that conveys a particular form of learning (the 'playful knowledge'), and one of its most representative characters would be Thales himself.<sup>108</sup> In other words, the joking anecdotes and the funny cantilena on Pittacus grinding reported by Thales represent seriocomic instruments of the *σοφία* and *παιδεία* expressed in Plutarch's work.

This analysis reveals that in the perception of Plutarch – and presumably also his readers – *PMG* 869 appears to be a frivolous *divertissement*. But simultaneously, this text retains a poetic appeal – probably guaranteed by its rhythmical refrain between work song and lyric poetry (cf. *supra*) – and acts as a piece of evidence for Pittacus' inclinations. In this case, *PMG* 869 seems to suit the context better than would have a

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<sup>105</sup> This opposition may reflect the fact that Epimenides was sometimes excluded from the lists of the Seven Sages, as he was actually by Plutarch, who had perhaps been influenced by Plato's negative judgment on seers. On the figure of Epimenides, cf. Lo Cascio 1997: 225 n. 168.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Mossman 1997: 122 and n. 15.

<sup>107</sup> On further ironical aspects in Plutarch's *Convivium Septem Sapientium*, which are however more focused on the bad fortune expected for some characters of the dialogue, cf. Mossman 1997: 122-127 and Kim 2009: 484 n. 14.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. Jedrkiewicz (1997: 70): 'è proprio questa la figura del *Simposio* che meglio esprime un orientamento serio comico: in essa una forte capacità speculativa si unisce ad una viva propensione umoristica.' Cf. also *ibid.* p. 59: 'Ma esso [*scil.* lo scherzo] scandisce altresì il discorso seriocomico collettivo: si veda come si svolge la lunga e grave discussione sul cibo. Si parte dai temi, eminentemente filosofici, dell'autolimitazione dei bisogni e della funzione del *nomos*. Cleobulo impiega apologhi ed immagini (i vestiti di Selene, il cane di Esopo, la tessitrice: 157a-b); Ardalo fa un burlesco riferimento al "senzafame" (*alimos*) di cui si nutre Epimenide (157d); Talete, in tono scherzoso (*episkopton*), recita la canzoncina delle donne di Ereso su Pittaco che trita frumento (157d-e). La serietà torna per gradi etc.'

quotation from the more canonical authorial tradition, which indeed occurs shortly after in a more serious context, when Solon quotes Hes. *Op.* 41 (Plut. *Conv. sept. sap.* 14.157e). Admittedly, the gap between the different aesthetic values of *PMG* 869 and this authorial fragment seems to be well realised. Nevertheless, this gap does not result in the conflicting distinction ‘non-literary’ (lowbrow folklore) vs. ‘literary’ (high literature). In the same way as the Hesiodic fragment, even *PMG* 869 becomes part of the symposium literature, albeit with a more peculiar function which is more appropriate to its own expressive traits.<sup>109</sup>

It must be remembered that, as early as the archaic period, symposia were a fundamental institution for education and the self-definition of elite literary society, and as such, they were a crucial context for the performance of literature.<sup>110</sup> Indeed, at least from the fourth century BC, the institutional construction of literature became the ideal vehicle for the creation of elite identity.<sup>111</sup> Although Plutarch’s *Convivium* is a fantasy version of elite sympotic conversation, it is able to recreate a setting in which elite members (represented by the Seven Sages) formulate and/or empower their sense of community by performing and sharing knowledge and literature. In such a context, *PMG* 869 represents no longer only a work song, but more specifically a sympotic (literary) song which is in turn authenticated and legitimised by the authoritative voice of Thales.

Moreover, the intrinsic fluidity of *PMG* 869 is reaffirmed if one compares the meaning of the anecdote about Pittacus grinding that is assumed in the literary tradition and the meaning that the same anecdote may have had in the original performative context of *PMG* 869 – that is to say, when this text was performed over the millstone.

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<sup>109</sup> For this reason, in line 2 of *PMG* 869, I have preferred the reading ἄλει (indicative present) over the reading ἄλει (conjecture by Köster 1831: 81), which has usually been interpreted as an imperfect with ᾱ (but can also be considered an Aeolic present with barytonesis). In my opinion, an indicative present is more appropriate to the immediate literary context, since it highlights the paradigmatic, moral value of Pittacus grinding (cf. Defradas 1985: 338 n. 1; Lo Cascio 1997: 226 n. 171). See also Budelmann (2018: 263), who, while printing ἄλει (as imperfect), admits that ‘(timeless) present ἄλει cannot be ruled out’. Moreover, the realism pinpointed in Plutarch’s dialogues involves not just the use of specific dialectal forms (cf. e.g. Lo Cascio 1997: 30) but may also convey the notion that Thales is telling an anecdote about one of his contemporaries, who is still alive and attending the banquet (cf. Neri 2003: 229, who however prints ἄλει as present indicative).

<sup>110</sup> Cf. e.g. Whitmarsh 2004: 52-67; König 2012: 38f., 139f., 179f.; Jacob 2013: 15-30.

<sup>111</sup> Cf. e.g. Hunter 1996: 1-13, 110-138; Whitmarsh 2004: 106-138.

In the literary tradition, the image of Pittacus grinding is conveyed not just through *PMG* 869, but also through one of the sayings attributed to him and transmitted in Ael. *VH* 7.4:

Note that Pittacus had a great deal to say in favour of the millstone, to his eulogy of it he added that it allows a great deal of exercise within a small area. There was also a song known as the millstone song.<sup>112</sup>

Grinding as a form of exercise is attached to Pittacus' mythology at least as early as Clearchus (fr. 71 Wehrli *ap.* Diog. Laert. 1.81). The same topos also occurs in Clement of Alexandria (*Paed.* 3.10.50.2) and Isidore of Pelusium (*Ep.* 1.470).<sup>113</sup> The existence of a milling song dedicated to Pittacus is however explicit solely in Aelian,<sup>114</sup> whereas in Clement and Isidore it might be implied by the term βασιλεύς. The fact that Pittacus is referred to as 'king' of Mytilene may derive from the very words of *PMG* 869 (cf. l. 3). At any rate, the meaning of this (more or less explicit) allusion to the work song seems to be quite clear. In Aelian – and perhaps in Clement and Isidore – *PMG* 869 would reinforce the image of Pittacus who, even though he is a king, does not disdain manual labour. The reference to the milling song would support the motif of Pittacus grinding as a paradigm of two Greek moral principles: αὐτάρκεια and εὐτέλεια (as opposed to τρυφή).<sup>115</sup> Such a paradigmatic character is likely to have guaranteed

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<sup>112</sup> Trans. Wilson 1997: 247. For the Greek text, cf. comparanda.

<sup>113</sup> For the Greek text, see comparanda. According to Wilamowitz (1890: 226), *PMG* 869 would have been composed long after Pittacus' tyranny, but would still have been sung by women in Eresus at the time of the Peripatetic Clearchus of Soli (4th-3rd c. BC), who would represent the ultimate source of Plutarch. Cf. also Smyth 1900: 510f. and Pordomingo 1991: 222 ('Diógenes Laercio dice basarse en Clearco el filósofo, discípulo de Aristóteles, quizás también la fuente de Plutarco').

<sup>114</sup> The reference to the milling song in Aelian surely cannot be traced back to Plutarch. On the autonomy and originality of Aelian from Plutarch, cf. Prandi 2005: 165 and 2005a.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. e.g. Blumenthal 1940: 127 ('Die Schlußformel [*scil.* in Isid. Pelus. *Ep.* 1.470] gibt mit ἐνεργῶς γυμναζόμενος Klearch, mit τὴν τροφὴν ἐργαζόμενος die plutarchische Auslegung wieder: alle drei repräsentieren also die gleiche Pragmatisierung und enthalten keine historische oder pseudo-historische Überlieferung. Wir dürfen daher von uns aus versuchen, dem Liedchen einen Sinn abzugewinnen, nachdem sich die pragmatische Erklärung aus soziologischen Gründen als unwahrscheinlich erwiesen hat') and Campbell 1982: 448f. ('Ancient writers (Aelian, Diogenes Laertius, Clement of Alexandria, St. Isidore of Pelusium) took ἄλει literally, explaining the milling as Pittacus' daily dozen'). Cf. also Parker 2007: 32 ('Even if we know little securely about his deeds while tyrant,

the popularity and hence the transmission of both the anecdote and the elements attached to it (including *PMG* 869).<sup>116</sup> As noticed by Wilamowitz (1890: 225 n. 1), it is not by chance that in Aelian's *Varia Historia* other sections of the seventh book (5, 9-11, 13) seem to refer to further examples of αὐτάρκεια/εὐτέλεια;<sup>117</sup> and that Clement, as soon as he quotes the example of Pittacus, also recommends that the good Christian 'draws water up by himself alone and chops wood' (καλὸν δὲ καὶ ὕδωρ ἀνιμῆσαι δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ ξύλα διατεμεῖν).

In the literary tradition, *PMG* 869 has a paradigmatic value, and therefore Pittacus' activity of grinding is seen as a positive example of a good ruler, one who is close to and involved with his people. However, if one takes a step back and looks at *PMG* 869 as a work song, removed from the literary context in which it has been embedded, radically different interpretations can be argued. For instance, *PMG* 869 has been given a negative political meaning and regarded as a protest song, a platform for (women's) social criticism and (anti-elite) mockery.<sup>118</sup> Not surprisingly, both in antiquity and in modern times, the performance of work songs enables the labourers to complain about their harsh conditions, by formulating their protests either openly or in

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we do know that his reputation stood high among the later Mytileneans. A later song [*scil. PMG* 869] implicitly makes much of his simplicity').

<sup>116</sup> See Wilamowitz (1890: 225): 'Die Neigung des Pittakos für diese Art von Gymnastik ist durch ein zur Zeit der zweiten Sophistik populäres Buch περὶ εὐτελείας, eine Parallele oder auch vielleicht einen zweiten Theil des von Athenaeus, Aelian und Anderen excerpirten Buches περὶ τρυφῆς, bekannt geblieben; und auch da war als Zeugnis das Lied angeführt.' Cf. also Lo Cascio (1997: 226 n. 171): 'D'altro canto prepararsi i cibi da sé, come faceva Pittaco, può essere considerato un aspetto di una virtù perseguita con impegno dai sapienti, la αὐτάρκεια, il "bastare a sé stessi".' It remains unclear whether Pittacus' saying and *PMG* 869 were put side by side from the very beginning of the tradition, or whether the one in fact derived from the other. Cf. e.g. Pordomingo 1991: 222 ('lo que en un momento pudo ser leyenda surgida de un canto célebre se asocia a él y los papeles se invierten: la cancioncilla justifica la leyenda'). This would be to ask which came first, the chicken or the egg.

<sup>117</sup> There are quoted, for instance, Odysseus, Achilles and Agesilaus of Sparta. The χρεῖα attributed to Agesilaus also reappears similarly in Plut. *Apophthegmata Laconica* 210b. On these passages, cf. Johnson 1997: 122f. According to Wilamowitz (*ibid.*), Aelian's passages may stem from a common source, presumably a collection of anecdotes showing examples of αὐτάρκεια/εὐτέλεια.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Welcker 1844: 117; Cerrato 1885: 315 n. 1; Blumenthal 1940: 127; Page 1955: 170 n. 5; Kirkwood 1974: 18; Pordomingo 1991: 222; Lambin 1992: 170f.; Lo Cascio 1997: 226f. n. 171; O'Higgins 2001: 149; Neri 2003: 229; O'Higgins 2003: 86; Neri 2011: 234f.; Forsdyke 2012: 95f., 101; Karanika 2014: 145, 151.

more metaphorical/veiled terms.<sup>119</sup> The interpretation of *PMG* 869 as a protest song rests on either the metaphorical use of the verb ἄλέω – which may recall Pittacus’ oppression of the people<sup>120</sup> or his sexual voracity<sup>121</sup> – or the mocking reference to his humble origins.<sup>122</sup>

The interpretative differences pinpointed in the anecdote about Pittacus’ grinding depend on the different contexts of use and consumption of *PMG* 869. Such differences reassert the intrinsic fluidity of the song at issue. *PMG* 869 could be ‘declined’ in different manners with different meanings, permeating both the everyday life of ancient Greece and its literary tradition. As a work song, *PMG* 869 was able to articulate the protest of labouring classes against a symbolic figure of elite oppression. By contrast, in Plutarch’s *Convivium* and in the later literary tradition, *PMG* 869 represented a sympotic song expressing paradigmatic and moral values.

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<sup>119</sup> Cf. Gioia 2006: 225-241; Korczynski–Pickering–Robertson 2013: 105-137; Karanika 2014: 156f. Gioia (2006: 39, 227) also reports a work song from ancient Egypt in which the workers voice their protest: ‘Must we spend all day carrying barley and white emmer? / The granaries are full, heaps are pouring over the opening. / The barges are heavily laden, the grain is spilling out. / But one hurries us to go. Is our heart of copper?’ More broadly, Gioia reflects upon the differences between ‘spontaneous’ protest songs and those purposely composed in the modern era to create class consciousness among labourers (cf. e.g. *The Internationale*).

<sup>120</sup> On the tyranny of Pittacus condemned by Alcaeus, see fr. 69, 70, 129, 348, 429 V. In general, on the figure of Pittacus as tyrant of Mytilene, cf. Parker 2007: 31f. and Neri 2011: 233-235. For ‘grinding’ in a hostile sense, cf. the proverb ὃψὲ θεῶν ἄλέουσι μύλοι, ἄλέουσι δὲ λεπτά (‘the millstones of the gods grind late, but they grind fine’, see Tosi, *DSL* no. 1982). See also *Isaiah* 3.15 (Vulgate) quare adteritis populum meum et facies pauperum commolitis dicit Dominus Deus exercituum.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. μύλλειν (= βινεῖν) in Theoc. *Id.* 4,58. Cf. Blumenthal 1940: 127. In this case, ‘the debasement of the high’ is carried out ‘through association with coarse bodily function’ (Forsdyke 2012: 101, in comparison to the way Clisthenes’s tribal reforms are depicted and degraded in Herodotus 5).

<sup>122</sup> According to Wilamowitz (1890: 226), this latter hypothesis would stem from the literary tradition in Alcaeus: ‘dieser [*scil.* Pittakos] aber in das Renommée gekommen ist, im μυλών gearbeitet zu haben, weil seine hochadligen Feinde ihm seine niedere Herkunft vorwarfen’ (cf. Smith 1900: 510f.). See also Defradas (1985: 338 n. 1): ‘les calomnies de ses adversaires le faisaient passer pour un homme de basse naissance, d’abord astreint à des besognes serviles’ (cf. Lo Cascio 1997: 226 n. 171). Indeed, in Alc. fr. 348.1 V. (cf. also fr. 67,4, 75,12 V.), Pittacus is said to be ‘of base parentage’ (κακοπατρίδης). Cf. Parker 1955: 169-179.



### 3.3 Final remarks

This chapter has analysed the nature of the work-song tradition in (though not exclusively to) ancient Greece and has explored how some of these texts were used by the literary sources and adapted into literate contexts. I have utilised a conceptualisation of work song which goes beyond the narrow notion of ‘work song proper’, in order to take into due account the rich variety of contents, themes and styles in the repertoires of song at work. Aspects such as fluidity and variety have in turn allowed us to consider work songs from the folkloric perspectives I have delineated in the present dissertation. Work songs do not belong to a determined genre, featuring well-defined and unchanging formal, stylistic and thematic traits. Rather, they represent a fluid genre, to which all kinds of songs that are used and performed in the function of a work activity belong. In brief, they help to alleviate the efforts and/or the monotony of the job. Given the prominence of a functional-occasional perspective in their use and reception, work songs can thus be considered folk songs.

In the specific analysis of *PMG* 849 and 869, I have stressed (though from different point of views) the fluidity, adaptability and reuse even of texts that appear to be inextricably tied to manual labour. While *PMG* 849 refers to the activity of collecting and tossing sheaves, *PMG* 869 describes the activity of grinding over the millstone. In 3.1, I showed the fluid nature of the *ioulos* song, wavering between a work song proper and a hymn to Demeter. In 3.2, by analysing the way *PMG* 869 is adapted and integrated into the narrative of a literary symposium, I tried to demonstrate that this text is not a grinding song in and of itself. *PMG* 869 acted as a work song only when performed at the millstone, but its expressive and aesthetical potentialities could be declined in different contexts with totally different meanings.

My analysis confirms that, when speaking of folklore, we cannot reduce the discussion to preconceived contexts of origin and composition or to pre-established formal criteria. In the case of work songs, the crucial point is not to identify a fixed and well-defined textual category. Rather, one should always be mindful of the endless variety of texts that can be used and perceived as work songs.

### 4.0 Introduction

In this final chapter, my aim is to apply the new conceptualisation I have offered in this dissertation to a range of religious and other types of ritual songs, focussing above all on their contexts of use and consumption. In particular, I shall take as case studies a series of texts connected to various religious cults – such as those of Demeter (*PMG* 847), Dionysus (*PMG* 851 and 871), Zeus (*PMG* 854), Apollo (*PMG* 860), Persephone (*PMG* 862) and Aphrodite (*PMG* 864) – as well as two songs performed during festivals or similar ritual occasions, which are however not strictly linked to an act of worship (*PMG* 868 and 870).

It is interesting to notice that the categories of both folklore (and especially folksong) and religious hymnology – as they have been approached in modern classical studies – suffer from the same interpretative limitations, namely that too sharp a line of demarcation is drawn between them and the canon of ancient Greek literature. In particular, folk songs and cult songs have both tended to be seen in direct opposition to literary texts. Even though many modern scholars now acknowledge the difficulty of clearly distinguishing – especially in the late archaic and classical period – between cult songs proper and ‘literary’ hymns,<sup>1</sup> cult-song traditions are nevertheless still often seen as standing apart from ‘high’ canonical poetry on the grounds of their (supposed) contexts of origin and composition. Cult songs are therefore characterised *a priori* as anonymous, primitive (or pre-literary), basic, and local, as opposed to the more sophisticated and Panhellenic tradition of authorial production.<sup>2</sup> These binary traits are precisely those which are usually adopted to distinguish between folksong and literature (cf. §1.1.2 and §1.2). In turn, the distinction between anonymous cult songs and authorial literary poetry may seem to bypass the debate over what passes, and what does not pass, for folklore, but in fact it cannot help but reflect those same theoretical binarisms.

In the framework of the religious song-tradition which will be explored in this chapter, I propose to go beyond such overly rigid distinctions of composition and formal characteristics

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. e.g. Bierl (2009: 274 n. 18): ‘Claude Calame (*per litt.*) correctly draws my attention to the fact that in investigating this one ought also to consider the status of poetry (ποίησις) in Greece during the classical period. Ritual songs exist ultimately only in poetic form, and the distinction between songs that can be ascribed to authors and *carmina popularia* (as with that between Homeric, anonymous, and inscriptional hymns) is somewhat illusory in this connection.’

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. Bremer 1981; Aubriot-Sévin 1992: 33-48; Furley 1995; Bremer 1998; Furley–Bremer 2001: 1.1-40, 112-116; Pòrtulas 2012: 235-241; Palmisciano 2014: 25-27; Feeney 2016: 218-225; D’Alessio 2017: 260.

and to focus attention on the modalities of use and perception of the various song performances. This approach clarifies that songs are not folk in and of themselves, but that the same song-text can be used and perceived differently according to its different contexts of reception and analysis. With specific regard to cultic and festive songs, their folkloric status has not been properly investigated before. The label *carmina popularia* has simply been taken for granted for them, and along with it a series of preconceptions roughly associated with these texts. In particular, they have often and vaguely been considered primitive (or pre-literary) and unsophisticated forms of poetry. A clear example of such an attitude is found in Pulleyn (1997: 149f.), who, among other texts (e.g. *carm. pop.* 849, §3.1), classifies *carm. pop.* 854 (§4.2.1) and 871 (§4.1.2) as ‘fossil prayers’, i.e. as ‘authentic cultic prayers’, belonging to an undefined archaic period, and featuring a kind of simplicity that sharply distinguishes them from their literary counterparts.<sup>3</sup>

Yet no tangible evidence will be found about the allegedly misty antiquity of the texts at issue. By contrast, they possess substantial elements which enable us to date the composition and performance of some of them within a defined period (classical or post-classical). Nor indeed can any clear traits be detected in them that can be considered peculiar to folksong. Quite differently, some of the formal traits will be analysed as recurring patterns of particular kinds of texts and/or genres of ancient Greek choral lyric as a whole. Once these stereotyped views, rooted as they are in a Romantic conceptualisation, are dismissed, more solid grounds on which to build the notion of folksong will be found in their contexts of use and consumption. In what follows, the reader is encouraged to bear in mind the ‘folkloric’ modalities of use and reception described in the introductory chapter (1.3). Folk songs will here be interpreted as songs used and perceived mainly from a functional-occasional perspective, and, accordingly, performed in recurring events (‘synchronic’ reperformances) without any need of an authorial/authoritative legitimisation (non-operative ‘author-function’). As a result, folk songs are traditional (but not necessarily ‘ancient’) by virtue of their synchronic recurrence, and they are not anonymous *per se* but are perceived as such.

For ease of reference, I have divided my analysis in this chapter into three sections. In the first section, I shall discuss three songs associated with the cult of Dionysus (*PMG* 851a-b and 871); in the second section, I shall analyse three more songs (*PMG* 854, 860 and 870)

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. e.g. Pulleyn (1997: 150): ‘The fossil prayers so far quoted have in common a certain simplicity. They are different in spirit from the more complex literary things that have come down to us on stone.’ Cf. also Aubriot-Sévin 1992: 36f.

whose contents treat many widespread ‘popular’ motifs in antiquity; and finally in the third section, I shall examine four song-refrains (*PMG* 847, 862, 864, 868) that were performed in accompaniment to different rituals and occasions.

#### 4.1 Singing for Dionysus

In the first section, I shall present three cases of songs associated with the cult of Dionysus: *PMG* 851a and b (§4.1.1), both of which were part of theatrical rituals, and *PMG* 871 (§4.1.2), a song performed by the women of Elis. I shall show the inadequacy of an interpretative approach based on preconceived contexts of origin and composition and pre-conceived criteria of sophistication, and consider these texts from different perspectives, which duly look at their respective contexts of use and reception.

##### 4.1.1 Folk songs at the theatre (*PMG* 851)

EDD *Carm. pop.* 5 Neri = 851 Campbell = *PMG* 851 = 10-11 Edmonds = 47-48 Diehl = 6-7 Smyth = 7-8 Bergk<sup>4,3</sup> = 8-9 Bergk<sup>2</sup> = 4-5 Bergk<sup>1</sup>.

FONS Ath. 14.622a-d Σῆμος δ' ὁ Δῆλιος ἐν τῷ περὶ Παιάνων (*FGrH* 396 F 24) ‘οἱ αὐτοκάβδαλοι, φησί, καλούμενοι ἐστεφανωμένοι κιττῷ σχέδην ἐπέραινον ῥήσεις. ὕστερον δὲ ἱαμβοὶ ὠνομάσθησαν αὐτοὶ τε καὶ τὰ ποιήματα αὐτῶν. οἱ δὲ ἰθύφαλλοι, φησί, καλούμενοι προσωπεῖα μεθύνωντων ἔχουσιν καὶ ἐστεφάνωνται, χειρῖδας ἀνθινὰς ἔχοντες· χιτῶσι δὲ χρῶνται μεσολεύκοις καὶ περιέζωνται ταραντῖνον καλύπτον αὐτοὺς μέχρι τῶν σφυρῶν. σιγῇ δὲ διὰ τοῦ πυλῶνος εἰσελθόντες, ὅταν κατὰ μέσῃν τὴν ὀρχήστραν γένωνται, ἐπιστρέφουσιν εἰς τὸ θέατρον λέγοντες· [*PMG* 851a]. οἱ δὲ φαλλοφόροι, φησὶν, προσωπεῖον μὲν οὐ λαμβάνουσιν, προσκόπιον δ' ἐξ ἐρπύλλου περιτιθέμενοι καὶ παιδέρωτος ἐπάνω τούτου ἐπιτίθενται στέφανον [τε] δασὺν ἴων καὶ κιττοῦ· καυνάκας τε περιβεβλημένοι παρέρχονται οἱ μὲν ἐκ παρόδου, οἱ δὲ κατὰ μέσας τὰς θύρας, βαίνοντες ἐν ῥυθμῷ καὶ λέγοντες· [*PMG* 851b]. εἴτα προστρέχοντες ἐτώθαζον οὖς [ἄν] προέλοιτο, στάδην δὲ ἔπραττον· ὁ δὲ φαλλοφόρος ἰθὺ βαδίζων καταπασθεὶς αἰθάλαφ.’

(a) ἀνάγετ', εὐρυχωρίαν

τῷ θεῷ ποιεῖτε·

θέλει γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ὀρθὸς ἐσφυδωμένος

διὰ μέσου βαδίζειν.

Numeri: lk | ith || 3ia | ith ||.

Codd.: ACE.

|| 1 ἄ. <ἀνάγετε κῶμον>, εὐ. Tyrwhitt, Porson : <ἀνάγετε κῶμον>, ἄ., εὐ. Bergk<sup>1</sup> : ἄ. <ἀνάγετε πάντες>, εὐ. Meineke : <ἀνάγετε πάντες>, ἄ., εὐ. Bergk<sup>3,4</sup>, rec. Smyth : <ἀνάγετ'> ἄ., εὐ. Wilamowitz<sup>2</sup>, rec. Diehl || 2 ποιεῖτε τῷ θεῷ A, Kaibel, Wilamowitz<sup>2</sup>, Diehl, Edmonds, Jacoby : π. (om. τ. θ.) CE : transp. PORSON || 3 ἐθέλει codd., Kaibel, Bergk, Smyth, Edmonds, Jacoby : corr. Meineke *ap.* Bergk<sup>2,3,4</sup> | ὁ θεὸς ὀρθὸς del. Edmonds (ὁ θεὸς del.

iam Wilamowitz *ap.* Kaibel, ὀρθός om. CE) | ἐσφυρωμένος codd., Schweighäuser, Bergk<sup>1,2</sup> : corr. Meineke : ἐσφηκ. aut ἐσφην. dub. Schweighäuser.

- (a) Keep back, make  
wide open space for the god.  
For, erect and bursting, the god wants  
to tread through the middle.

- (b) σοί, Βάκχε, τάνδε μοῦσαν ἀγλαΐζομεν,  
ἀπλοῦν ῥυθμὸν χέοντες αἰόλω μέλει,  
καινὰν ἀπαρθέεντον, οὗ τι ταῖς πάρος  
κεχρημέναν ᾠδαῖσιν, ἀλλ' ἀκήρατον  
κατάρχομεν τὸν ὕμνον.

5

Numeri: 3ia | 3ia | 3ia | 3ia | 2ia<sup>^</sup>||.

Cod.: A (b om. CE).

|| 3 καὶ μὲν A, Schweighäuser : corr. Hemsterhuys || 4 κεχρημεῖαν A : corr. Porson : κεχρήμεθα μὲν ὦ. Schweighäuser.

- (b) To you, Bacchus, we offer this song,  
pouring out simple rhythm in a changeful melody,  
something new and virginal you cannot find  
in former songs: a pure  
hymn we strike up.

In this subsection, I shall focus on the performative context of *PMG* 851 and, more importantly, consider the kind of reception these texts may have enjoyed when performed. The aim is not to establish whether or not *PMG* 851 represents folk poetry from a formal perspective alone (i.e. by identifying definitive folkloric traits). Quite the opposite: I want to show that these songs, which can be called ‘phallic’, can still be considered folk songs, regardless of their criteria of sophistication and by taking into due account their specific (performative) contexts of use and perception.

*PMG* 851 is composed of two stanzas, which bands of Dionysian entertainers – the *ithyphalloi* and the *phallophoroi* – would sing when making their entrance into the theatre.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> A melic performance can be reasonably supposed even though both texts – with an iambic rhythm – are introduced by the participle λέγοντες (referring to the entertainers). The use of the unmarked verb λέγω ‘simply

Athenaeus' passage (14.622a-d), which quotes the texts and which is said to be drawing upon Semus' *On Paeans* (FGrH 396 F 24),<sup>5</sup> offers a description of such performers and their respective performances.<sup>6</sup> The so-called ἰθύφαλλοι are said to wear the masks of drunkards and to be garlanded. In addition, their outfit comprises flowery (or embroidered) sleeves, whitish chitons and a long ταραντῖνον.<sup>7</sup> The *ithyphalloi* recite their verses (PMG 851a) at the centre of the orchestra, after entering the theatre in silence. On the other side, the φαλλοφόροι do not wear masks, but an elaborate form of headwear<sup>8</sup> made of tufted thyme and twigs of παιδέρωσ (*Quercus Ilex*).<sup>9</sup> A thick wreath of violets and ivy is placed on top. Wrapped in a thick woollen cloak (καυνάκης),<sup>10</sup> they come into the theatre – some by the side entrance (ἐκ παρόδου), some by the middle doors (of the skene?) – while marching in step and singing a song to Bacchus (PMG 851b). Finally, the *phallophoroi* would be expected to rush forward to the watching

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conveys the information, then, that the text of the songs, which consists only of their *logos*, “goes as follows” (Bierl 2009: 288 and n. 63). Athenaeus' Epitome confirms the melic performance at least for PMG 851b. The text is not quoted, but the Epitome summarises that the phallophoroi ‘firstly sing a song (marching) in step’ (καὶ πρῶτα μὲν ᾄδουσί τι ἐν ῥυθμῷ). On the musical performance of iambic poetry in ancient Greece more generally, see now Rotstein 2010.

<sup>5</sup> Semus of Delos is a third-century BC historian and antiquarian (cf. §3.1 n. 24). It is no surprise that Semus talks about Dionysiac songs in his work *On Paeans*. As already seen, in another passage of the same treatise, again quoted by Athenaeus, Semus discusses another song in honour of a deity besides Apollo, i.e. a hymn to Demeter (PMG 849, §3.1). As well as these, we do not know what kinds of songs Semus included under the versatile genre of paean. He might have used this label loosely and/or have simply added parallel examples of cultic hymns of a different kind. Cf. Bierl 2009: 298 and n. 87; Palumbo Stracca 2013: 508 n. 20.

<sup>6</sup> On this passage as a whole, cf. Brown 1997: 31-35; Rotstein 2010: 269-276; further bibliography in Bierl 2009: 282 n. 42. The passage opens with the description of a third kind of performers, the so-called αὐτοκάβδαλοι. They recited their pieces (ῥήσεις) wearing ivy-wreaths and were referred to, along with their poems (ποιήματα), as ἱαμβοί.

<sup>7</sup> A diaphanous and extremely fine cloak mostly worn by women. Cf. Brown 1997: 33 n. 77; Bierl 2009: 287 n. 60. On the effeminacy of the *ithyphalloi*, see also *Suda* ι 250 A. ἰθύφαλλοι· οἱ ἔφοροι Διονύσου καὶ ἀκολουθοῦντες τῷ φαλλῷ, γυναικεῖαν στολὴν ἔχοντες (‘[...] wearing women's clothing’).

<sup>8</sup> The codices read προπόλιον (*hapax legomenon*), which has been emended in προσκόπιον (‘visor’, Kaibel) and in προκόμιον (‘female wig’, Meineke). Cf. Citelli 2001: 1605 n. 9; Bertelli 2016 *ad l.*

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Bierl 2009: 286 n. 56.

<sup>10</sup> This kind of cloak would have been imported from Persia in the fifth century BC. Cf. Miller 1997: 154f.; Bierl 2009: 287 n. 61.

crowd and then stop to mock spectators randomly,<sup>11</sup> while the man carrying the phallus-pole (ὁ φαλλοφόρος) keeps marching, smeared with soot.<sup>12</sup>

The *ithyphalloi* and the *phallophoroi* here described represent professional (or semi-professional) actors performing in laughter-inducing spectacles. Their songs may have acted as a prelude to dramatic competitions or to other theatrical representations.<sup>13</sup> However, what Semus offers is probably a strict classification of a much more complex phenomenon: phallic performances were likely extremely widespread in ancient Greece, with different local peculiarities and in constant evolution over time.<sup>14</sup> As the passage stands, very little can be said about the specific *Sitz im Leben* of PMG 851. First, the exact location is undisclosed, even though Delos (Semus' own home) remains the most likely candidate.<sup>15</sup> In turn, this does not exclude that the same or similar song-texts could be performed elsewhere. Second, no temporal indication is given: Were these phallic songs still sung at Semus' time? If not, in what period were they composed and performed? As a result of such uncertainties, the two anonymous texts have normally been included in the heterogeneous collection of the *carmina popularia*. The editors do not explicitly account for this inclusion, which has nonetheless brought about two

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. Bierl (2009: 289): 'They do so standing (στάδην), presumably in contrast to the processional march of the hymn. They have set up their formation (στάσις) in the orchestra, but this does not mean they stand still, but as in the *stasimon*, they are now free to make fools of selected citizens through dance and vulgar gestures.'

<sup>12</sup> What is not made explicit in the entire passage are the types of phalluses distinguishing the two kinds of performers. As showed by Csapo (2013: 57-60), the *ithyphalloi* are generally connected with phallus-sticks, whereas the *phallophoroi* became a technical term indicating those who carried gigantic phallus-poles on very large parade floats. However, it can be inferred from the text of PMG 851a that the *ithyphalloi* described by Semus were carrying a phallic float as well (cf. *infra*).

<sup>13</sup> According to Bierl (2009: 310), 'Two possibilities present themselves. The ritual complex described is either a preparatory ceremony that precedes the dramatic competition, as in Athens, or a simple performance presented in the theatre mainly as a *divertimento*, as became common in the Hellenistic period.' Cf. also Rotstein (2010: 272 n. 68): 'Given the reference to the *ithyphalloi* performing in the *orchestra* and the *phallophoroi* coming from the *parodos*, could they have performed in the θυμελικοί ἀγῶνες, i.e. those performed in the orchestra, which were not only musical competitions but also included drama?'

<sup>14</sup> For instance, Csapo (2013: 57) doubts 'very much that costumes were ever as regular as Semus implies.' On further examples of phallic performers, see Csapo 1997; Csapo 2013: 57 n. 54, 58f. n. 60. Similarities have been detected in the costumes of the entertainers described in Semus and in those of some phallic dancers depicted in a group of late archaic and early classical vase-paintings (cf. Csapo 2013: 55f.).

<sup>15</sup> See e.g. Cole 1993: 30-34. We know that Semus also wrote about cults of Delos in his own works: cf. e.g. PMG 847 from Semus' *Delian Histories* (or *Delian Antiquities*, FGrH 396 F 14).

contrasting views about the nature of *PMG* 851. Though different, both views in fact reflect a similar conceptualisation of folksong, interpreted as a form of pre-literary and lowbrow poetry.

On the one hand, the texts in *PMG* 851 have been given an aura of primitivism, a concept often tied to the romantically-inclined notions of folklore and folksong. They have been taken without argument to be pre-literary compositions, from which later (literary) genres would have derived.<sup>16</sup> For instance, there is a long tradition of scholarship that identifies *PMG* 851 with those phallic songs (τά φαλλικά) out of which – according to Aristotle’s notorious claim – Attic comedy first arose.<sup>17</sup> The historical and cultural value of Aristotle’s statement has now been reassessed<sup>18</sup> and numerous critical doubts have been expressed regarding the link between the phallic rites mentioned in Semus and the origins of Greek comedy.<sup>19</sup>

On the other hand, the same texts have been considered as high-standard poetry belonging to the late classical (or even later) period, and hence, the label of *carmen popolare* attached to them has been seen as inapposite. Smyth (1900: 501) already claimed that *PMG* 851b ‘is late and scarcely genuine folk-lyric’, as if the fact that the song was not archaic undermined its folkloric character, once again equating ‘folk’ as early and ‘primitive’.<sup>20</sup> More recently, Magnani (2013a: 566) has called into question the inclusion of both *PMG* 851a and b in the *carmina popularia*, on the grounds that these texts may date back to the end of the fifth century BC and that both of them do not betray a lower poetic style, as would be appropriate to folk songs.

In what follows, my aim is to move beyond the conventional distinction between folksong (as pre-literary poetry) and literature (as ‘high’ lyric poetry). First, I shall confirm that the phallic songs in *PMG* 851 share a rhetoric with a series of late- and post-classical – especially dramatic – texts, but that even so they can be considered folk songs. The connection

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. also the specific discussion on *PMG* 851a (*infra*).

<sup>17</sup> Arist. *Poet.* 1449a11-12 ἡ [*scil.* κωμῳδία] δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν [*scil.* ἐξαρχόντων] τὰ φαλλικά ἃ ἔτι καὶ νῦν ἐν πολλαῖς τῶν πόλεων διαμένει νομιζόμενα. Cf. e.g. Cerrato (1885: 213): ‘E preziosi chiamo i frammenti di Ateneo [*scil.* *PMG* 851], perché da questi canti e scherzi improvvisati negli spettacoli popolari trasse origine, secondo Aristotele, la commedia.’ In particular, *PMG* 851b has often been connected with the genesis of the parabasis of Old Comedy. For a detailed overview on the link between *PMG* 851 and the origins of comedy, see Bierl 2009: 270, 272 n. 15, 310-314 (with extensive bibliographical notes).

<sup>18</sup> Cf. e.g. Rothwell 2007: 25-27; Csapo 2013: 40f.; Rosen 2013.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. e.g. *DTC*<sup>2</sup> 132-162; Rotstein 2010: 270f. (with further bibliography).

<sup>20</sup> On *PMG* 851b as a crossover between a (primitive) folk song and a later (more sophisticated) composition, cf. also Pordomingo 1996: 475; Adrados 2007: 79f., 142. Lambin (1992: 341-343) argues for a late date both for *PMG* 851a and 851b.



with theatrical genres is not accidental, since *PMG* 851 consists of ritual and pre-dramatic songs which were performed at the theatre. Second, I shall argue that *PMG* 851 is better not considered as a representative of a linear historical development of increasing literary sophistication, extending from the primitive ritual of phallic performances to the ‘high’ tradition of ancient Greek drama. On the contrary, we should consider the possibility that *PMG* 851 may well have been influenced by late dramatic performances (irrespective of its original date of composition).

Modern scholarship has emphasised similarities and continuities of various types between ritual practice and dramatic performance.<sup>21</sup> The substantial difference is that cultic song in drama is always integrated into a plot sequence to a greater or lesser degree, while ritual songs such as *PMG* 851 are performed independently of a dramatic plot.<sup>22</sup> Undoubtedly, a ritual song relates to its own performance and its ritual context in a more direct way than a comedy or tragedy, which invokes the language of a performance to invoke an imaginary ritual that is not really happening. But this does not imply that we can draw a precise distinction, based on internal, formal elements of the text alone, between ‘literary’ theatrical genres and ‘pure’ ritual presentations staged at the theatre. Rather, I argue that what really makes the difference are the modalities of use and perception, which, as we have already seen, are fundamental for interpreting folksong. Independent ritual songs performed in the theatre – as opposed to dramatic cultic lyric (tied to a narrative plot) – tend to be used and perceived mainly from a functional-occasional perspective (over a stand-alone one).<sup>23</sup> For this reason, the phallic songs in *PMG* 851 can indeed be considered folk songs.

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<sup>21</sup> Similarities between theatre and ritual have been described from various points of view (e.g. thematic, linguistic, stylistic, etc.). On this relationship, the bibliography is extensive. Key studies are e.g. Foley 1985; Bowie 1993; Henrichs 1994/1995; Lada-Richards 1999; Csapo 1999/2000: 416–426; Lightfoot 2002; Sourvinou-Inwood 2003; Bierl 2009; Revermann 2014a. Cf. also Furley–Bremer 2001: 1.273–279, 337–342, as well as the vehement reaction of Scullion 2002 against the *interpretatio Dionysiaca* of Greek tragedy. On the ancient theatre as a performative space for various rituals, see Chaniotis 2007; Giordano 2014.

<sup>22</sup> The analysis of Bierl (2009: 267–325) is fundamental in this regard. He considers *PMG* 851 not as a proof of the genetic interrelations between phallic rites and Greek Comedy, but, more effectively, as a document of living choral culture.

<sup>23</sup> It is important to stress that not all ritual songs – performed independently of a dramatic text – are used and perceived mainly from a functional-occasional perspective (cf. e.g. the case of Alcman’s *Partheneion* 1, discussed *supra* §1.3.2). Here I am comparing, more specifically, dramatic cultic lyric and ritual presentations untied to a dramatic plot but still performed at the theatre.

Let us now explore the performative function of these texts and their relationship, in terms of rhetoric, with other theatrical genres. To clarify, this relationship does not show that *PMG* 851 is a relic of pre-literary lyric out of which literary poetry had developed; rather, it shows that *PMG* 851 was part of a living choral culture, which, in some cases, can be interpreted from a folkloric perspective.

To begin with, the *ithyphalloi* – after taking up position in the middle of the orchestra – announce the arrival of the θεὸς ὀρθός (*PMG* 851a.3).<sup>24</sup> The god in question is likely to be Phales, the personification of the phallus, who is in turn connected (indeed sometimes identified) with Dionysus.<sup>25</sup> The *ithyphalloi* are likely to be carrying on-stage a giant phallus-pole, while giving instructions to make a great deal of room for the entry of the Phallus-god (in his ithyphallic state): *PMG* 851a.1-2 ἀνάγεται, εὐρυχωρίαν / τῷ θεῷ ποιεῖτε.<sup>26</sup> Such a song may thus have marked the arrival-point of a (phallic) procession in a theatre.<sup>27</sup> Phallic choruses are well attested for the *pompe* that opened the Dionysia festival in fifth-century BC Athens and its demes,<sup>28</sup> and they are thought to have taken place even in some later Dionysiac celebrations outside Attica, e.g. the Dionysia in Hellenistic Delos.<sup>29</sup> A literary example can be found in the parodos of Aristophanes' *Acharnians* (241-279), where Dikaiopolis leads a (private) phallic procession on the occasion of the rural Dionysia and sings an iambic ode to Phales (ll. 263-279). The relation between *PMG* 851 and Dikaiopolis' celebration has been widely discussed.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> The ithyphallic state of the god is better represented if we accept (in the same line) Meineke's (1859: 120; 1867: 298) emendation ἐσφυδωμένος 'swollen to the point of bursting', 'to be vigorous' (cf. Timocl. fr. 31.2 KA *ap.* Ath. 6.246f δειπνοῦσιν ἐσφυδωμένοι, Hsch. σ 2932 Hans. σφυδῶν· ισχυρός, εὐρωστος, σκληρός) instead of the reading ἐσφυρωμένος of the codices. Cf. Bierl 2009: 295 n. 79.

<sup>25</sup> For example, in Ar. *Ach.* 263f. (Φαλῆς, ἑταῖρε Βακχίου, / ξύγκωμε), Phales is defined as 'a companion and fellow-comast of Dionysus' (cf. *infra* on this passage). Dionysus was also worshipped with the additional names of Ὀρθός and Φαλλήν. Cf. Brown 1997: 34 n. 80; Bierl 2009: 290f. n. 69, 295 n. 79.

<sup>26</sup> Does the chorus of the *ithyphalloi* address the audience? Alternatively, are the *ithyphalloi* instructed by a chorus-leader or do they order themselves to move aside? On these and further choreographic issues, see Bierl 2009: 292.

<sup>27</sup> On theatres as arrival-points for processions in antiquity, cf. Giordano 2014: 159.

<sup>28</sup> See e.g. Csapo–Slater 1994: 105f.; Csapo 2013; Csapo 2014: 97-104.

<sup>29</sup> In general, cf. Scarpi 2002: 584f. On the Delian Dionysia, see the epigraphic sources in Csapo–Slater 1994: 44f., 48. Phallus-wagons are attested in Hellenistic Delos and Edessa (cf. Csapo 1997: 282f.). Phallic rituals performed in a theatre are also described in a third-century AD inscription from Euboea (*SEG* 29.807, 35.967; cf. Csapo 1997: 278f.). More broadly, on dramatic festivals of the Hellenistic period, see Kotlińska-Toma 2015: 264-280.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Bierl 2009: 314-325 (with extensive bibliography, cf. esp. p. 314 n. 125).

For instance, Silk (1980: 129-135) classifies Dikaiopolis' song as 'low lyric *plus*', that is to say, as a 'creative combination (not a mere mixture) of low with high'.<sup>31</sup> In Silk's view, the 'low' in Aristophanes would stem from folksong,<sup>32</sup> and more specifically, Dikaiopolis' ode to Phales would be based on τὸ φαλλικόν, 'a popular form' of lyric.<sup>33</sup> While not referring to *PMG* 851 explicitly, Silk considers the (folk) genre of phallic songs a low-class poetic form, from which 'high' poetry took inspiration. I propose to abandon this hierarchical approach and to accept a (more plausible) relationship of interdependence. In the parodos of the *Acharnians*, Aristophanes is surely drawing much of his inspiration from some 'real' ritual performances. But at the same time, ritual songs such as *PMG* 851 can be influenced by its dramatic parallels. Establishing which text precedes the other in such examples is not always possible.

More to the point, I argue that *PMG* 851a and b are best understood as products of the late classical and early Hellenistic period rather than primordial or archaic folk forms. I shall now link *PMG* 851a to two more processional songs from this period and show how 851b expresses the same preoccupation with the rhetoric of 'newness' as a range of fourth-century 'high' sources.

That *PMG* 851a is to be considered part of a living choral culture is confirmed by two other examples of ithyphallic songs sung in the Hellenistic period. Both texts feature the same metrical sequence (3ia | ith) as is found in *PMG* 851a,<sup>34</sup> as well as similar performative aspects. The first is the ithyphallic hymn performed by the Athenians in 291 or 290 BC to greet Demetrius Poliorcetes as their liberator.<sup>35</sup> The ancient sources (see Ath. 6.253c) describe

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<sup>31</sup> On Silk's (often too severe) evaluation of Aristophanes' lyrics, cf. Furley–Bremer 2001: 1. 340-342; Bierl 2009: 89.

<sup>32</sup> 'His [*scil.* of Aristophanes] affinities are rather with the tradition of low lyric that descends from folk song' (Silk 1980: 125).

<sup>33</sup> 'That τὸ φαλλικόν was a popular form is not in doubt, and some features of Aristophanes' song must be conventional (e.g. the ὦ Φάλης Φάλης refrain?)' (Silk 1980: 133 n. 107).

<sup>34</sup> Only the first verse of *PMG* 851 is a lekythion. Modern editors have tried to normalise the metre and restore an iambic trimeter by conjecture (cf. critical apparatus). But the transmitted text is acceptable by considering that the ithyphallic is the catalectic form of the lekythion (cf. Bierl 2009: 291 n. 70; Palumbo Stracca 2013: 505 n. 8)

<sup>35</sup> Demetrius' comeback from the Ionian Islands to Athens follows his marriage to Lanassa. Some information about the performance of the hymn is contained in Democh. *FGrH* 75 F 2, while the actual text is quoted by Duris *FGrH* 76 13. Both passages are included in Ath. 6.253b-f. The hymn is sometimes attributed to Hermocles of Cyzicus (pp. 173-175 Pow.), who is known to have composed a paean in honour of Demetrius and his father Antigonos Monophthalmus (Philoch. *FGrH* 328 F 165 *ap.* Ath. 15.697a). On the performance, poetic

processional choruses and *ithyphalloi* who marched to meet Demetrius with dances and chanting: προσοδιακοὶ χοροὶ καὶ ἰθύφαλλοι μετ' ὀρχήσεως καὶ ᾠδῆς ἀπήντων αὐτοῦ.<sup>36</sup> Ithyphallic performances, that is to say, distinctly Dionysiac performances, well befitted the figure of Demetrius, whose ruler cult fostered a close association with the god Dionysus.<sup>37</sup> The exact route of the procession is unknown, but a theatre – presumably the theatre of Dionysus in Athens – can be assumed as its arrival point, such as in the case of *PMG* 851a. Only four or five years earlier (in 295), Demetrius had literally staged his ‘epiphany’ in Athens as a *deus ex machina* in the theatre of Dionysus (at the time of the celebration of the Great Dionysia).<sup>38</sup> Moreover, we know that theatres were privileged spaces for the performance of rituals related to the ruler-cult in the Greek and Roman world: in particular, they often functioned as the arrival-points of processions celebrating rulers and emperors.<sup>39</sup>

The second text is the ithyphallic song by (or transmitted by) a certain (otherwise unknown) Theocles (p. 173 Pow.) and quoted by Athenaeus (11.497c):

μνημονεύει αὐτοῦ Θεοκλῆς ἐν Ἰθυφάλλοις οὕτως·

ἐθύσαμεν γὰρ σήμερον Σωτήρια

πάντες οἱ τεχνῖται·

μεθ' ὧν πιὼν τὸ δίκηρας ὡς τὸν φίλτατον

βασιλέα πάρειμι.

Theocles mentions this drinking-vessel in the *Ithyphalloi* as follows:

‘Today we made the sacrifice,

All us artists,

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style, language and historical context of the ithyphallic hymn for Demetrius, see now Chaniotis 2011; Palumbo Stracca 2013.

<sup>36</sup> ‘È da credere che l’espressione προσοδιακοὶ χοροὶ καὶ ἰθύφαλλοι non indichi due categorie differenti di esecutori, bensì due momenti distinti della *performance* (il canto processionale e il canto sul posto)’ (Palumbo Stracca 2013: 508).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. e.g. (with further bibliography) Chaniotis 2011: 163-171; Palumbo Stracca 2013: 509.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. e.g. Chaniotis 2011: 163f. On the ‘theatricality’ of Demetrius and other rulers, see also Gebhard 1996: 114.

<sup>39</sup> See the studies of Gebhard (1988 and 1996), as well as the considerations in Chaniotis 2007: 52f. and Kotlińska-Toma 2015: 273f. Cf. e.g. the procession at Gythium in 15 AD from the sanctuary of Asclepius to the theatre in honour of the imperial family (Augustus, Tiberius and Livia; *SEG* 11.923), or the hymns performed in the theatre of Ephesus to celebrate Hadrian’s visit of the city in 128 AD (*I.Ephesos* 1145).

that's part of the Soteria festival;  
I drank the double-horn along with them, and  
I'm here to visit our beloved king'.<sup>40</sup>

The historical and performative context of this text is not entirely clear. Nevertheless, the elements mentioned in it – the *Technitai* of Dionysus, the ritual sacrifices and libations in the king's honour (Ptolemy Philadelphus or Ptolemy Philopator?), a Ptolemaic (?) festival called the Soteria (in honour of Ptolemy Soter?) – make us think of another (presumably processional) musical performance dedicated to the royal cult.<sup>41</sup> West (*GM* 148) has discussed *PMG* 851a in relation to the two Hellenistic ithyphallic songs here presented as a folk 'model for the new festival compositions'. His view once again reflects the pre-conceived understanding of folksong as the antecedent of more developed (and sophisticated) forms of lyric poetry.<sup>42</sup> The precise relationship between *PMG* 851a and these texts is still shrouded with uncertainty. What is clear is that *PMG* 851a does not belong to an undefined and remote past, but to a specific genre of cultic poetry still performed in the Hellenistic period.<sup>43</sup>

Similar considerations can be made for *PMG* 851b, which is to be regarded as a cultic hymn well integrated into the theatrical and cultural environment which had formed since the late fifth century BC (especially in Athens), and with which it shared both a rhetorical and a dramatic context. *PMG* 851b accompanies the procession of the *phallophoroi* entering the

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<sup>40</sup> Transl. Olson 2009: 421 (slightly modified). It is not clear whether Theocles is an author of ithyphallics or whether he is a scholar-historian who described and collected ithyphallic performances and performers. The very title of his work leads to this ambiguity.

<sup>41</sup> See e.g. Fraser 1972: 232f.; Lightfoot 2002: 220; Bierl 2009: 291 n. 70. The Dionysiac *Technitai* played a significant role in the royal processions (cf. Lightfoot 2002: 221).

<sup>42</sup> For the same reasons, Smyth (1900) included the hymn to Demetrius Poliorcetes in his collection of *carmina popularia* (no. 27). He also (1900: 513) accepted the attribution to Hermocles (cf. *supra* n. 35) and, therefore, classified the hymn as a 'non-genuine folksong' (on the grounds that a pure folksong is to be anonymous). Why did Smyth bother to include in his collection of *carmina popularia* an authorial (so non-genuinely folk) song? He too is likely to have considered the hymn to Demetrius a literary composition modelled upon its folk parallel (*PMG* 851a).

<sup>43</sup> According to Palumbo Stracca (2013: 505), *PMG* 851a, the hymn to Demetrius and Theocles' composition share affinities even from a linguistic point of view: 'privi di dorismi (sia pure di facciata), senza tratti ionico-epici, questi itifalli usano una *facies* che possiamo definire sostanzialmente attica con elementi di κοινή.'

theatre.<sup>44</sup> The song introduces a hymn in honour of Dionysus (σοί, Βάκχε, τάνδε μοῦσαν ἀγλαΐζομεν [...] κατάρχομεν τὸν ὕμνον),<sup>45</sup> and it does so in terms of novelty and innovation: the hymn is to be new (καινὰν), virginal (ἀπαρθένευτον) and unmixed (ἀκήρατον). Probably because of the nuance of ἀκήρατον,<sup>46</sup> West (followed by others) relates this text to the prologue of Euripides' *Hippolytus*, when Hippolytus himself advances towards the statue of Artemis by offering a garland he has 'fashioned from an untrodden meadow' (Eur. *Hipp.* 73-77):<sup>47</sup>

σοὶ τόνδε πλεκτὸν στέφανον ἐξ ἀκηράτου  
 λειμῶνος, ὃ δέσποινα, κοσμήσας φέρω,  
 ἔνθ' οὔτε ποιμὴν ἀξιοῖ φέρβειν βοτὰ  
 οὔτ' ἥλθέ πω σίδηρος, ἀλλ' ἀκήρατον  
 μέλισσα λειμῶν' ἥρινὴ διέρχεται.

For you, lady, I bring this plaited garland I have made, gathered from **a virgin meadow**, a place where the shepherd does not dare to pasture his flocks, where the iron scythe has never come: no, **virgin it is**, and the bee makes its way through it in the springtime.<sup>48</sup>

West discusses *PMG* 851b as a folk 'parody' (West 1974: 36) or 'imitation' (West, *GM* 147 n. 23) of this Euripidean passage. Here he signals an altogether different regard towards the folk tradition from the one expressed for *PMG* 851a, albeit one that still reflects a conceptualisation of folksong as a category completely distinct from that of literature. In the earlier case, *PMG* 851a is the pre-literary model of later poetic compositions, whereas here

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<sup>44</sup> It is unclear whether the performance of *PMG* 851b was choral – sung by all the *phallophoroi* or a part of them – or whether it was a solo performance of the chorus-leader (cf. e.g. Adrados 2007: 80), while the other participants were busy carrying the phallus-pole (cf. *supra* n. 12). On the ritual functionality of a leader (or *exarchos*) who directs the movements of the *phallophoroi* and 'takes up the principal burden of the song', cf. Csapo 2013: 58.

<sup>45</sup> What is doubtful is 'whether the lines were really followed by a hymn or whether this is already achieved through this introduction itself, which then transitions into *tôthasmos*' (Bierl 2009: 308). The verb κατάρχομεν (*PMG* 851b.5) is a technical verb used in the performative context of the introduction. The composites κατάρχειν/-εσθαι and ἀπάρχεσθαι – along with the simplex ἄρχεσθαι – convey both the general beginning of an action and in particular the beginning of a ritual action, mostly preparatory ceremonies for sacrifice (cf. Bierl 2009: 307 n. 109). More specifically, the verbs ἄρχειν/-εσθαι and κατάρχειν, followed by an accusative, indicate the speech act of striking up a song, as in *PMG* 851b (cf. Bierl 2009: 308 n. 110).

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Bierl 2009: 304 n. 101.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. also Neri 2003: 208f. ('Un chiaro parallelo di (*b*) si ha nell'*Ippolito* euripideo [...]').

<sup>48</sup> Transl. Kovacs 1995: 131.

*PMG* 851b is the sub- or para-literary version of a text belonging to the ‘high’ poetic tradition. I propose a radically different interpretation. The features shared by *PMG* 851b and Hippolytus’ speech do not betray a direct derivation of the former from the latter (or vice versa); rather, they may derive from a common cultural milieu. More specifically, I identify this cultural background with the so-called New Musical ‘revolution’, which, since the last quarter of the fifth century BC, had significantly affected theatrical genres such as dithyramb and drama, including the works and musical component of Euripides.<sup>49</sup> One of the main programmatic motives of the so-called ‘New Music’ was the claim to innovation and novelty, which was no longer approached as a merely poetic topos,<sup>50</sup> but as an object of investigation proper.<sup>51</sup> When the *phallophoroi* emphasise, remarkably, that their hymn is brand-new and making its debut for the very first time, and when Euripides adopts the concept of ἀκήρατον (also occurring in *PMG* 851b), a strong influence of the poetics of the New Music can be argued.

The Euripidean image of the ἀκήρατος λειμών is also found in the preface of one of the poems of Choerilus of Samos, an epic poet of the late fifth century BC (Choeril. fr. 2 Bernabé = *SH* 317):

ᾗ μάκαρ, ὅστις ἔην κείνον χρόνον ἴδρις ἀοιδῆς,  
 Μουσάων θεράπων, ὅτ’ ἀκήρατος ἦν ἔτι λειμών·  
 νῦν δ’ ὅτε πάντα δέδασται, ἔχουσι δὲ πείρατα τέχναι,  
 ὕστατοι ὥστε δρόμου καταλειπόμεθ’, οὐδ’ πη ἔστι  
 πάντη παπταίνοντα νεοζυγὲς ἄρμα πελάσσαι.

O blessed is he, who was skilled at song, a servant of the Muses, at that time when the meadow was still undefiled; but now that everything is divided, there are boundaries to the arts, to the point that we are left behind last in the race, and it is not possible for me, although I peer everywhere, to steer a newly yoked chariot.<sup>52</sup>

Choerilus laments that poetic innovation is no longer possible in the field of epic, and he regrets the good old days when the ‘meadow was still undefiled’.<sup>53</sup> In the text, the compound

<sup>49</sup> See e.g. Csapo 1999/2000; Csapo 2004; LeVen 2014.

<sup>50</sup> The claim to innovation and newness is a topos well established in Greek poetry from its very early stages (cf. e.g. Bierl 2009: 298f. n. 90, 300f. n. 93).

<sup>51</sup> See D’Angour 2011: 202-206, 216-224; LeVen 2014: 87-101.

<sup>52</sup> Transl. LeVen 2014: 92.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. the analysis in D’Angour 2011: 58-61.

νεοζυγὲς also appears, by virtue of which LeVen (2014: 90-93) has compared Choerilus' prologue to the *sphragis* of Timotheus' *Persians*, that is to say, to the poetic manifesto of one of the most representative authors of the New Music. The same adjective is found there, in relation to the 'newly fashioned Muse' (Timoth. *PMG* 791.203 Μοῦσαν νεοτευχῆ). LeVen shows that the compound νεοτευχής, which in Homer (*Il.* 5.193-194) is used to describe war chariots, in both Choerilus' and Timotheus' passages metaphorically implies the 'freshly-yoked chariot of song', an image fully in keeping with the New Musical propaganda. Once the cultural dependence of Choerilus' poetics upon the New Music is established, the image of the ἀκήρατος λειμών – adopted by Choerilus from Euripides – as well as the concept of ἀκήρατον used to qualify the hymn self-referentially in *PMG* 851b can be looked at in the same way.

The close correlation of *PMG* 851b with the New Musical rhetoric and poetics appears even more evident in the terms αἰόλω (l. 2) and καινὰν (l. 3). These adjectives were often employed by the New Musicians as technical terms by which to represent their own poetics. The adjective αἰόλος – along with the verb αἰολέω – is one of the privileged terms that New Musicians used to describe the aesthetic effect of their poetry, referred to since antiquity as *poikilia*.<sup>54</sup> For instance, Telestes – author of dithyrambs and one of the acknowledged champions of the New Musical style – 'describes the art of *aulos*-playing as αἰολοπτέρυγον ("quick-fluttering", *PMG* 805c.2) and αἰολομόρφοις ("of quick-moving forms", *PMG* 806.3)' (LeVen 2014: 103).<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, the adjective καινός specifically flags the innovative hallmark of the New Music, understood in terms of a new age, in which everything is to be 'newly invented' and different in kind and quality. Such a concept is peculiar to the New Music and contrasts with another kind of 'newness', which is expressed by earlier poets through the adjective νέος and which mainly refers to 'the latest chronologically'.<sup>56</sup> An extremely radical defence of the concept of καινός (novel in kind) – as opposed to νέος (new in time) – appears in a passage from Timotheus (*PMG* 796), which presumably represents the *sphragis* of one of his compositions (maybe a *nomos* or a dithyramb):

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<sup>54</sup> See Csapo 2004: 226-229; LeVen 2014: 101-105.

<sup>55</sup> The adjective αἰόλος referring to a lyric performance also appears in Ar. *Ran.* 247f. (χορείαν αἰόλαν), Theoc. *Id.* 16.44 (αἰόλα φωνέων, implying Simonides' songs) and Nonnus, *Dion.* 19.100 (αἰόλον ὕμνον). Moreover, the phrase αἰόλω μέλει (*PMG* 851b.2) also occurs (in the same case) in Lycoph. Alex. 671 (implying the Sirens' song). For the same or similar αἰόλος-related terms, cf. Gow 1952: 2.315; Bierl 2009: 303f. n. 100.

<sup>56</sup> On this terminological opposition and, more broadly, on the semantics of 'novelty' in ancient Greece, see D'Angour 2011: 19-27, 71-84.



οὐκ αἰδῶ τὰ παλαιά,  
**καινὰ** γὰρ ἀμὰ κρείσσω·  
**νέος** ὁ Ζεὺς βασιλεύει,  
τὸ πάλαι δ' ἦν Κρόνος ἄρχων·  
ἀπίτω Μοῦσα παλαιά.

I don't sing the ancient songs, because the novel ones I compose are better. It is the young Zeus who is king, but in ancient times Cronos was the ruler. Let the Muse of old go away!<sup>57</sup>

Both notions of 'newness' presented here share τὰ παλαιά as a semantic opposite: as well as the 'novel songs' (καινὰ) in opposition to the 'ancient ones' (παλαιά), the 'young Zeus' (νέος) is contrasted with the 'ancient Cronos' (τὸ πάλαι... Κρόνος).<sup>58</sup> The big difference lies in the fact that the concept of καινός effectively conveys the focus of the New Musicians such as Timotheus not on what is new merely in comparison with an previous era (cf. νέος), but on what is qualitatively novel or innovative (new in style and approach). It is therefore significant that the same terminological choice is made in *PMG* 851b. As a result of the profound influence exerted by the New Musical poetics over this text, the hymn of the *phallophoroi* cannot be traced back earlier than the late fifth century BC.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, it also cannot be excluded that the performance of *PMG* 851b was current in the Hellenistic period (in Semus' time), when the style and the poets of the New Music had not certainly lost their sensational appeal.<sup>60</sup>

In this subsection, I have shown that the two phallic songs in *PMG* 851 represent documents of a living choral culture, not remnants of a primitive past. They are not pre-literary models or sub-literary versions of a 'high' theatrical tradition; rather, they appear to have been deeply influenced by classical dramatic genres. This is a very reasonable relationship to surmise, given the fact that *PMG* 851 consists of two ritual songs performed in the theatre as

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<sup>57</sup> Transl. LeVen 2014: 89 (with discussion). The potential relation between *PMG* 851b and this text is also briefly mentioned by Lambin 1992: 342.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. also Timoth. *PMG* 791.211-212 (ὅτι παλαιότεραν νέοις / ὕμνοις Μοῦσαν ἀτιμῶ).

<sup>59</sup> According to Pickard-Cambridge, for example, 'the iambic lines of the song are [...] in the conventional lyric dialect used by Attic poets' (*DTC*<sup>2</sup> 142). Here, he is specifically referring to dramatic poets.

<sup>60</sup> On the lasting influence and enduring popularity of the New Musicians (especially Timotheus) in the theatrical and musical performances of Hellenistic times, see Csapo–Wilson 2009: 279f.; Dale 2010/2011.

preludes.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, from such a functional-occasional perspective, these texts can be distinguished from their dramatic parallels. While *PMG* 851a marks the arrival-point of a phallic procession in a similar way to that of some dramatic presentations of processional rituals, *PMG* 851b introduces a hymn to Dionysus in the same terms of novelty and innovation as are expressed by the poets of the New Music. Nevertheless, the ritual procession of the *ithyphalloi* is not embedded in a plot sequence, nor is the *phallophoroi*'s claim to newness inserted into a narrative context (such as, by contrast, in the case of Timotheus). This does not bring about rigid textual categorisations, according to which the two phallic songs are to be interpreted separately from the literary tradition, on the basis of their contexts of origin and production and set criteria of sophistication. What really makes the difference are the modalities of use and perception. The songs in *PMG* 851 are likely to have been used and perceived mainly from a functional-occasional standpoint. In this sense, the same texts can be considered folk songs. Viewed in this light, both the song of the *ithyphalloi* and that of the *phallophoroi* are traditional and anonymous songs, not in the sense that they are remotely archaic texts composed by unknown 'folk' poets, but because they were sung on the occasion of recurring (theatrical) rituals, whose performance did not require the authorisation of an authorial/authoritative voice. The phallic entertainers represent here a mere medium by which cultic folk songs belonging to the entire civic community gathered at the theatre were performed.<sup>62</sup>

As elegantly summarised by Bierl (2009: 278), *PMG* 851a-b together represent an interesting case of 'popular songs connected with ritual custom, anchored in the real world'. Such songs, however, can also be considered as literary texts, that is to say, as textualised songs 'handed down as literature', in the same way that the other examples of dramatic and cultic lyric analysed above have been transmitted to us.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> In sports events, heralds used to announce the beginning and/or the end of competitions with traditional songs: cf. *carm. pop.* *PMG* 863 and 865 respectively (see Neri 2003: 222-225).

<sup>62</sup> On the absence of a clear differentiation between performers and spectators in the theatrical performances of ancient Greece, cf. e.g. Bierl 2009: 268.

<sup>63</sup> Bierl (2009: 278): 'Self-reference to activity in the here and now marks Semus' songs of the *Ithyphalloi* and the *Phallophoroi* as popular songs connected with ritual custom, anchored in the real world. They can thus be classified as part of the tradition of ritual and communal choral poetry. At the same time, they should be viewed as an artistic representation in the Hellenistic sense. This phenomenon of being on the border between a ritual utterance, a serenade performed in a Hellenistic theatre constructed of stone, and a minor artform handed down as literature makes these quotations of particular interest. Yet poetic composition and ritual use, as in the case of Aristophanes, are not mutually exclusive.' Bierl's use of 'minor art form' is a way of saying that the phallic songs of *PMG* 851 are folk forms that have found their place within the 'high' tradition, but in a low place within it.

#### 4.1.2 The ox-foot of Dionysus at Elis (*PMG* 871)

EDD *Carm. pop.* 25 Neri = 871 Campbell = *PMG* 871 = 4 Edmonds = 46 Diehl = 5 Smyth = 6 Bergk<sup>4,3</sup> = 7 Bergk<sup>2</sup> = 3 Bergk<sup>1</sup> = 24 Schneidewin.

FONS Plut. *Quaest. Graec.* 36.299a-b Διὰ τί τὸν Διόνυσον αἱ τῶν Ἑλείων γυναῖκες ὕμνοῦσαι παρακαλοῦσι βοέῳ ποδὶ παραγίνεσθαι πρὸς αὐτάς; ἔχει δ' οὕτως ὁ ὕμνος· [*PMG* 871.1-5]. εἴτα δις ἐπάδουσιν [*PMG* 871.6-7].

ἐλθεῖν, ἦρω Διόνυσε,  
Ἀλείων ἐς ναὸν  
ἀγνὸν σὺν Χαρίτεσσιν  
ἐς ναὸν  
τῷ βοέῳ ποδὶ θύων.

5

ἄξιε ταῦρε,  
ἄξιε ταῦρε.

Numeri: l. 1 enoplian (en<sup>b</sup>: -----ⱥ--Ɽ||); l. 2 prosodiac (or 2 molossi) (pros<sup>b</sup>: -----||); l. 3 pherecratean (pher: xx-ⱥ--Ɽ||); l. 4 molossus (mol.: ---||); l. 5 feminine hemiepes (hem<sup>f</sup>: -ⱥ-ⱥ-ⱥ-ⱥ-||); ll. 6-7 adoneans (ad: -ⱥ-ⱥ-Ɽ||). Cf. Leutsch 1856: 730; Usener 1887: 80f.; Smyth 1900: 501; Wilamowitz 1921: 384f.; Del Grande 1962: 24; Webster 1970: 60; West, *GM* 146f.; Furley–Bremer 2001: 2.374; Adrados 2007: 167f.; Carrano 2007: 147; Pavese 2014: 132.

Codd.: dkv.

|| **1** (ἐλθεῖν, sic!) ἦρως Δ. Schneidewin, rec. Bergk<sup>1</sup> : ἐ. ἦρ' ὦ Δ. Cook, rec. Titchener, Carrano, Boulogne, Bernardakis, prob. Halliday : ἐλθ', ἦ. Δ. (iam ἐλθ' ἦρως Δ. Köster) aut ἐλθεῖν, ὦ Δ. Hartman : ἐλθ' ἡμῖν, ὦ Δ. Brown : ἐλθ' ἦρ' ὦ Δ. aut ἐλθ' ἐν ἦρ', ὦ Δ. West | Διόνυσον dub. Bergk<sup>3,4</sup> || **2** ἄλιον codd., Titchener, prob. Schlesier : corr. Bergk<sup>2,3,4</sup> : ἄλιον Welcker, prob. Köster, rec. Schneidewin, Bergk<sup>1</sup> : Ἀλεῖον Cobet, rec. Smyth, Diehl, Boulogne : Φαλείων aut Φαλεῖον West | ἐς] ἐπὶ Hartman || **2-3** ἐς ἀγνὸν / ναὸν traiec. dub. West || **3** ἀγνὸν] ἀρίανον Bergk<sup>4</sup> : ἀγναῖσιν Wilamowitz<sup>2</sup> | σὺν] ἀμᾶ Leutsch || **4** <Ἀλείων> ἐ. v. Leutsch, rec. Carrano, prob. Brown | ἐς ναὸν del. Hartman, West || **5** τῷ del. dub. Page, West : τεῷ Bergk<sup>4</sup> | βοέῳ τῷ traiec. dub. West | θύων] θεῖω Köster (iam θεῖον aliquis) : δύων Titchener, Page || **6-7** Νάξιε Cobet.

Cf. Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 364e-f αἱ δ' Ἑλείων γυναῖκες καὶ παρακαλοῦσιν εὐχόμεναι 'ποδὶ βοεῖω' τὸν θεὸν ἐλθεῖν πρὸς αὐτάς.

Come, Lord Dionysus,  
to the sacred temple,  
of the Eleans, along with your Graces,  
to the temple  
raging on your ox-foot.

Worthy bull,  
worthy bull.

In this subsection, I shall show that some linguistic and stylistic aspects of *PMG* 871 can be related to mainstream Greek lyric poetry of the classical period. The similarities detected cannot clarify the chronological relationship between *PMG* 871 and the texts compared, but they will indicate that *PMG* 871 can be – and, in antiquity, were – read from literary perspectives. This view does not deny the folkloric status of *PMG* 871, but rather is a means of showing its reception from different perspectives. If we want to interpret *PMG* 871 as a folk song, we need to remove a conceptualisation of the genre based on preconceived contexts of origin and composition, and to look at the modalities of use and perception of the text within its performative contexts.

*PMG* 871 is a cletic hymn in honour of Dionysus, which – according to Plutarch (*Quaest. Graec.* 36.299a-b, *De Is. et Os.* 364e-f) – the women of Elis would perform in order to summon the god to their temple.<sup>64</sup> The precise identity of these women,<sup>65</sup> the ritual setting<sup>66</sup> and the modalities of their performance<sup>67</sup> remain unclear. Modern scholarship has generally regarded *PMG* 871 as one of the oldest remnants of Greek cultic poetry.<sup>68</sup> In the views of these

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<sup>64</sup> On *PMG* 871, cf. Zell 1826: 60f.; Köster 1831: 41-43; Cerrato 1885: 208-210; Halliday 1928: 152-159; Del Grande 1962: 20-29; Brown 1982; Mitsopoulos-Leon 1984; Pordomingo 1991: 216f.; Lambin 1992: 343-345; Furley–Bremer 2001: 1.369-372, 2.373-377; Scullion 2001; Schlesier 2002; Carrano 2007: 146-149; Magnani 2013: 61f. According to Halliday (1928: 153), the ultimate source would be the work *Περὶ ὁσίων* by Socrates of Argos (second century BC?), who is quoted by Plutarch at the end of the passage from *De Is. et Os.* 364e-f. Cf. also Pordomingo 1991: 217 with n. 16.

<sup>65</sup> Many scholars – e.g. Halliday 1928: 156f.; Calame 2001: 114-116, 136f.; Furley–Bremer 2001: 1.370; Carrano 2007: 146 – have identified them with the Elean college of the ‘sixteen women’. This college formed in around 600 BC with religious and political duties (Paus. 5.16.2-8) and was still active by 271 BC (Plut. *De mul. vir.* 251e). Scullion (2001: 210) and Schlesier (2002: 170 n. 34, 176, 187) doubt the identification of the ‘women of Elis’ mentioned by Plutarch (in *PMG* 871) with the ‘sixteen women of Elis’ mentioned by the other sources.

<sup>66</sup> The hymn is generally associated with the god’s visit to Elis at the festival Thyia, mentioned in Paus. 6.26.1-2. Cf. Scullion 2001: 205-209.

<sup>67</sup> According to Calame (2001: 79f. with n. 214) and Adrados (2007: 78f.), for example, only the closing double refrain is choral (*PMG* 871.6-7), whereas the rest of the hymn is a solo performance.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Usener 1887: 81 (‘ältestes denkmal griechischen versbau’); Smyth 1900: 500 (‘in style and metre, this animalized liturgy is archaic’); Nilsson 1906: 292 (‘Das hohe Alter des eleischen Kultliedes ist unstreitig’); Edmonds 1940: 511 (‘in this very ancient invocation’); Webster 1970: 59 with n. 3 (‘A maenad song which is probably old’); Brown 1982: 305 with n. 4 (‘Although it is impossible to date a piece like this with any certainty, scholars have generally considered it to be of great antiquity, and it may well be the earliest Greek lyric that we

scholars, it is not clear how ancient the hymn may actually have sounded. When being more specific, they tend to consider it a primitive or pre-literary form of dithyramb.<sup>69</sup> In one of the most recent analyses, Furley and Bremer (2001: 1.369) have classified *PMG* 871 as ‘the oldest extant Greek cult song’ on the basis of ‘the extreme simplicity of its poetic form: a very short stanza followed by a simple acclamation repeated at the end’.<sup>70</sup> This view reflects the misleading assumptions often associated with the texts included in the *carmina popularia*. For its part, *PMG* 871 is placed in a preconceived context of origin and composition – referring to an undefined remote past – and is analysed according to criteria of sophistication. As already discussed, the exercise of drawing up a list of formal features which count as ‘sophistication’ and which can then be used to assess the ‘popularity’ or ‘primitiveness’ of a piece of literature is a very vague (scholarly) activity, which for the most part recycles its own presuppositions (cf. §1.1.2.ii and §1.2.2). Secondly, the fact that *PMG* 871 is a small-scale piece does not reveal anything about its origins and/or its intrinsic qualities, *a fortiori* if one considers that there is no knowing whether the text quoted by Plutarch represents the complete hymn or just part of a larger one.<sup>71</sup> However, once these biased conceptual constraints have been taken away, *PMG*

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possess’); Lambin 1992: 344 (‘la chanson doit être ancienne, encore qu’on ne la puisse dater’); Pulleyn 1997: 149f. (discussed *supra* §4.0); Furley–Bremer 2001: 1.369 (‘This may be the oldest extant Greek cult song’). Other references are to be found in Brown 1982: 305 n. 4; Mitsopoulos-Leon 1984: 278 n. 22; Schlesier 2002: 164 n. 13. The only two exceptions pointing to a later date (in the Hellenistic period) are those of Wilamowitz 1921: 384 (‘Das eleische Kultlied, das schon wegen Form Διόνυσσε, aber auch wegen der Sprache auf hohes Alter keinen Anspruch hat, sondern von einem Peripatetiker der ersten oder zweiten Generation aufgezeichnet sein mag’) and Mitsopoulos-Leon 1984: 278 with n. 24 (‘Die Tatsache, daß es erst bei Plutarch genannt ist, aber auch seine Form lassen jedoch die Überlegung zu, ob es nicht vielleicht frühestens in hellenistischer Zeit entstanden sein könnte’).

<sup>69</sup> Cf. e.g. Harrison 1908: 437f. (‘it is the earliest dithyramb preserved’) and, more extensively, Del Grande (1962: 21–29; ‘un piccolo brano liturgico-rituale antecedente ai ditirambi letterari che si posseggono’). On *PMG* 871 as dithyramb, cf. also Calame 2001: 79; Schlesier 2002: 164; Zimmermann 2008: 24, 134. This classification – grounded in the relation among Dionysus, bull and dithyramb (see Ieranò 1997: 172–174) – turns out to be all but unproblematic. As we know, what made a lyric poem a dithyramb was a matter of debate even in antiquity and, therefore, concepts such as pre- or proto-dithyramb are dangerous and difficult to define (cf. Ieranò 1997: 172f. n. 43).

<sup>70</sup> Similar considerations are also found in Pordomingo 1991: 216 (‘En este himno, que formalmente presenta un gran esquematismo, propio de un himno primitivo, Dioniso es invocado como héroe y en forma de toro’) and Lambin 1992: 345 (‘elle [*scil.* *PMG* 871] présente un caractère populaire qui peut expliquer l’aspect effectivement un peu “rudimentaire” des vers’).

<sup>71</sup> For instance, according to Carrano (2007: 9, 148), *PMG* 871 would represent the final section of a larger hymn.

871 can be interpreted from very different perspectives. In what follows, I shall show that the linguistic and stylistic features of the text do not necessarily point to a primitive/pre-literary status, and in some cases can even be read as reflecting recurring patterns in Greek lyric poetry of the classical period. Such considerations will be especially helpful in understanding in what sense *PMG* 871 is to be seen as a folk song.

From a linguistic vantage-point, *PMG* 871 does not feature a local and/or archaic character, but is rather reminiscent of the standard and artificial language used by classical lyric poets. In this regard, very interesting is the expression ἐς ναὸν ἄγνον (ll. 2f.) – which finds a close parallel in a cletic prayer addressed to Apollo in *Timoth. Pers.* 237-38 ἀλλ’ ἑκαταβόλε Πύθι’ ἄγναν / ἔλθοις τάνδε πόλιν σὺν ὄλβῳ (‘Come, far-shooting Pythian, to this holy city and bring prosperity with you’)<sup>72</sup> – as well as the dative form Χαρίτεσσιν, which occurs as early as Homer (*Il.* 17.51) and is also widely attested in Pindar.<sup>73</sup> Even the form Ἀλείων (l. 2)<sup>74</sup> reflects nothing but the common use of long-α that is found in the standard language of the Greek lyric tradition.<sup>75</sup> More specifically, the long-α forms for Ἥλις and Ἥλειος can also be found in Pind. *Isthm.* 2.24 (σπονδοφόροι Κρονίδα Ζηνὸς) Ἀλεῖοι, *Ol.* 1.78 ἐς Ἄλιν, 9.7 (σεμνόν τ’ ἐπίνειμαι) ἄκρωτήριον Ἄλιδος, as well as in Callim. *Epigr.* 60.1 Pf. (*AP* 7.523,1 = *HE* 1225) (οἷτινες) Ἀλείοιο (παρέρπετε σᾶμα) Κίμωνος, *Ia.* 6 fr. 196.1 Pf. Ἀλεῖος ὁ Ζεύς.<sup>76</sup>

The only apparently problematic form is ἥρω (l. 1), which has been subject to various emendations (cf. apparatus). Firstly, ἥρω as vocative is not attested elsewhere: normally the vocative should be identical with the nominative ἥρως. Secondly, this attribute would refer to a primordial heroic status of Dionysus, which is however considered highly implausible for a

<sup>72</sup> Cf. also Alcman. *PMGF* 14b νεοχμὸν ἄρχε παρσένοις ἀείδην / καὶ ναὸς ἄγνός [ἀγνᾶς codd. : corr. Hermann] εὐπύργῳ Σεράπνας. Brown (1982: 306, 313f. n. 53) also cites as parallel Sapph. fr. 2.1-2 V. δεῦρό μ’, αἱ Κρητεσσὶ π[ερ, ἔλθ]ε ναῦον / ἄγνον, on the basis of his reconstruction of the fragment.

<sup>73</sup> Just to quote the victory odes, see Pind. *Nem.* 9.54, 10-38, *Pyth.* 9.3. Cf. also Bacchyl. 5.9 and, in Hellenistic literature, Theoc. *Id.* 16.109. In the Elean inscriptions, the plural dative of the third-declension names is generally in -οις, whereas the cases in -εσσι are very rare (see Thumb–Kieckers 1932: 245).

<sup>74</sup> This is the reading of Bergk 1853: 1028. The manuscripts read ἄλιον. If the transmitted reading is kept, an Elean sanctuary by the sea should be assumed: this thesis is argued by Schlesier 2002. However, as is appositely stated by Pordomingo (1991: 217), ἄλιον is ‘quizá explicable por itacismo de un originario Ἀλείων y neutralización en la duración de la vocal de timbre [o] en una transmisión oral’.

<sup>75</sup> Therefore, the attempts to restore the original dialect form Φαλείων or Φαλεῖον (cf. apparatus) appear to be inappropriate and misled by the (supposed) primitiveness of the song.

<sup>76</sup> Such a terminology has a Latin equivalent in Plautus’ *Captivi*, in which, however, the recurring forms *Alis* and *Aleus* (or *Alius*) serve to highlight the Doric origin of the play’s characters (see Lodge 1924: 89, 93).

deity of the Greek pantheon.<sup>77</sup> As a matter of fact, both difficulties can be smoothened out.<sup>78</sup> On the one hand, the vocative ἥρω may be justified by the analogy with the forms πότνια and ἄνα, irregular vocatives themselves for πότνια and ἄναξ respectively. On the other hand, the term ἥρωξ referred to Dionysus may imply a meaning other than the expected ‘hero’. For instance, ἥρωξ would originally have been used as an honorific title, presumably as equivalent to ‘Lord’.<sup>79</sup> In Mycenaean Greek, there occurs the form *ti-ri-se-ro-e*, which has been interpreted as the dative of Τρις-ἥρωξ ‘thrice Lord’, title of a deity or a deified person.<sup>80</sup> Another hypothesis is that ἥρω denotes an original heroic cult of the bull, later assimilated to Dionysus.<sup>81</sup> Interestingly, the same term appears (1) in relation to a bull ‘worth one hundred staters’ who is described in a Delphic inscription of the early fourth century BC (*IG* 2<sup>2</sup>.1126.32 [τ]οῦ βουὸς τιμὰ τοῦ ἥρωος ἑκατὸν στατήρες), (2) with reference to Macrinus, one of the Bacchic initiates listed in a second-century AD inscription from Terranova near Rome (*IGUR* 160, coll. I A-B; III A-B).<sup>82</sup> Cumon (1933: 237-239) claims that ἥρωξ in the bacchic inscription is an archaism indicating the leader of the college of initiates, who ‘prenait donc le même titre que les dieux qu’il servait’.<sup>83</sup> In brief, the vocative form ἥρω, whatever its peculiar meaning in relation to Dionysus, may well point to an archaism. But the sole presence of an archaism in *PMG* 871

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<sup>77</sup> See Brown 1982: 306-312, who rejects a series of reasons given in support of the worship of Dionysus as a hero. On the other hand, Spineto (2005: 224 n. 139) counters Brown’s objections and argues for the ‘heroic’ character of Dionysus, by assuming not a full identification of the god with a hero, but by allowing him heroic attributes. Cf. also Jeanmaire 1951: 46.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Furley–Bremer 2001: 2.374f. (in defence of the reading ἥρω).

<sup>79</sup> See Pfister 1912: 546-548 and 1922: 2131, with particular reference to the Homeric poems. As regards *PMG* 871, see e.g. Wilamowitz 1932: 8f. and Nock 1972: 595 (‘the word itself [*scil.* ἥρωξ] was once a term of respect, like *kyrios*, *dominus*, Messire, my Lord’). Cf. also Harrison (1908: 438), who interprets the term in the sense of ‘strong’, and Cook (1925: 823 n. 1), who interprets it in the sense of ‘young’ (as opposed to his father Zeus and other Olympian gods).

<sup>80</sup> See Ruijgh 1967: 89 and Aura Jorro, *DMic* 353f. Stella (1965: 248 and n. 74) attributes the Mycenaean title to Dionysus himself (contra Bernabé 2013a: 31 and n. 46).

<sup>81</sup> Cf. e.g. Harrison 1908: 437f.; Cumont 1933: 238; Furley–Bremer 2001: 1.371 and 372 (‘we suggest that the Elean women in their song address simultaneously the animal which is going to be sacrificed and will acquire quasi-heroic status, and the god Dionysus himself’). Bulls often appear in relation to the song of Dionysus *par excellence*, as prizes of the dithyrambic agones: see Ieranò 1997: 27f., 173 n. 44. On the literary topos of bull-shaped Dionysus, cf. *infra* n. 85.

<sup>82</sup> The mention of ‘hero’ Macrinus is at col. I A 3. On this inscription, see Scarpi 2002: 246-249, 569-572.

<sup>83</sup> On similar positions, see also Kerényi 1976: 353f.; Frenkel 1978: 103 n. 80.

does not allow us to regard the whole hymn as primitive and pre-literary. Archaisms suit the formal style of ancient Greek prayers and hymns as a whole.

Besides the linguistic evidence, two stylistic features that can be read as recurring motifs in Greek choral poetry of the classical period are pinpointed in the expressions τῷ βοέῳ ποδὶ (l. 5) and σὺν Χαρίτεσσιν (l. 3) of *PMG* 871. Both phrases are used self-referentially by the chorus of the Elean women to comment on their own performance: the former would refer to the ritual dance Dionysus is invited to join, the latter the songs that should accompany such a dance. Let us start with the syntagm τῷ βοέῳ ποδὶ, which can be broken up into two constituents. On the one hand, the adjective βοε(ι)ός is interpretable as a clear reference to the taurine image of Dionysus,<sup>84</sup> a widespread topos in the poetic and visual arts of ancient Greece.<sup>85</sup> On the other hand, the mention of Dionysus' foot may refer to his dancing step and consequently to the dance of the Elean women. In his investigation into sacral podology in Greek literature, Scullion (1998: 101-104) lists a series of passages – especially from choral lyric – in which divine epiphanies are characterised by the mention of feet (human or divine).<sup>86</sup> In these cases, among which *PMG* 871 is also quoted, both the god and the worshippers who invoke the god are dancing. For the purpose of my analysis, it is worth focusing more in detail on two passages, where Dionysus is also invoked to join the ritual dance of the chorus through the synecdoche of his foot. The first one is *Soph. Ant.* 1140-1145:

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<sup>84</sup> Cf. also the double invocation ἄξιε ταῦρε at the end of *PMG* 871, generally interpreted as a further epithet of bull-Dionysus (see Weil's supplement Εἴς τε Ταῦρε in *Philod. Scarph.* fr. 2 Pow.; Furley–Bremer 2001: 2.59, 377).

<sup>85</sup> In *Quaest. Graec.* 36.299a-b (cf. FONS), Plutarch offers a range of potential explanations concerning this syntagm (cf. *infra*). In *De Is. et Os.* 364e-f (cf. comparandum), Plutarch specifies that the epithet βουγενής ('born of a bull') is common among the Argives (Ἀργεῖοις δὲ βουγενὴς Διόνυσος ἐπικλὴν ἐστίν). In the same passage (364e-f), there is also a reference to *PMG* 871 and to the bull-shaped statues of Dionysus (διὸ καὶ ταυρόμορφον Διόνυσον ποιοῦσιν ἀγάλματα πολλοὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων). Similar considerations occur in Athenaeus (2.38e), where the author asserts that bull-Dionysus is a common pattern in Greek art and poetry. Indeed, as we know, this topos is often found in Greek literature: cf. e.g. *Soph.* fr. 959.2-3 R.<sup>2</sup> ὁ βούκερος / Ἰακχος, *Eur. Bacch.* 100 ταυρόκερον θεὸν, 618 ταῦρον εὐρών, 920-22 καὶ ταῦρος ἡμῖν πρόσθεν ἡγεῖσθαι δοκεῖς / καὶ σὺ κέρατα κρατὶ προσπεφυκέναι. / ἀλλ' ἢ ποτ' ἦσθα θήρ; τεταύρωσαι γὰρ οὖν, 1017 φάνηθι ταῦρος, *Ion Chius* fr. 86.2 Leurini (= *PMG* 744.2) ταυρωπόν, *Lycoph. Alex.* 209 Ταῦρω, *AP* 9.524.20 ταυρωπόν, *Hymn. Orph.* 30.4 ταυρωπόν, 45.1 ταυρομέτωπε, 52.2 ταυρόκερος. On these and further references, see Smyth 1900: 500; Halliday 1928: 154f.; Bérard 1976; Frenkel 1978; Burkert 1985: 371f. n. 89; Furley–Bremer 2001: 2.371f.; Scullion 2001: 213-218; Neri 2003: 232; Di Benedetto 2004: 293; Carrano 2007: 146f., 149; Macías Otero 2013: 333 n. 19.

<sup>86</sup> On ritual self-referentiality in dancing choruses (especially in tragedy), cf. also Henrichs 1994/1995.



καὶ νῦν, ὥς βιαίας ἔχεται  
πάνδαμος πόλις ἐπὶ νόσου,  
**μολεῖν καθαρσίῳ ποδὶ** Παρνασίαν  
ὕπερ κλιτὺν ἢ στονόεντα πορθμόν.

So now, when the whole city is subject to a violent sickness, come with cleansing foot over the Parnassian slope or groaning strait.<sup>87</sup>

Here we find the same use of a jussive infinitive to summon the god – with *μολεῖν* performing the same function as *ἐλθεῖν* in *PMG* 871.1<sup>88</sup> – and again a reference in the dative to Dionysus' foot accompanied by an adjective (*καθαρσίῳ ποδὶ*). The meaning of the adjective varies depending on the context: in the Sophoclean passage it no longer refers to the bull-shaped image of Dionysus, but to the cathartic effect of his dancing step.<sup>89</sup> A second passage that can be compared to *PMG* 871 is *Ar. Ran.* 323-335:

Ἰακχ' ὦ πολυτίμητ' ἐν ἔδραις ἐνθάδε ναίων,  
Ἰακχ' ὦ Ἰακχε,  
**ἐλθε** τόνδ' ἀνὰ λειμῶνα χορεύσων  
όσίους ἐς θιασώτας,  
πολύκαρπον μὲν τινάσσων  
περὶ κρατὶ σῶ βρύνοντα  
στέφανον μύρτων, **θρασεῖ δ' ἐγκατακρούων**  
**ποδὶ** τὰν ἀκόλαστον  
φιλοπαίγμονα τιμήν,  
**Χαρίτων** πλεῖστον ἔχουσιν μέρος, **ἀγνήν**,  
ιερὰν όσίοις μύσταις χορεΐαν.

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<sup>87</sup> Trans. Scullion 1998: 98 (slightly adapted). After Creon has exited the stage by admitting the unfairness of his behaviour, the chorus of Thebans Elders (strophe b of the fifth stasimon) invokes the presence of Dionysus.

<sup>88</sup> On the verbs of coming in Greek prayers, see Pulleyn 1997: 136-144. On the use of the jussive infinitive in Greek prayers, see Pulleyn 1997: 150-155.

<sup>89</sup> Scullion (1998) challenges the view that the chorus of Theban Elders is praying for the purification of Thebes from a pollution arising from the unburied body of Polynices: an unattested function of Dionysus. More convincingly, *καθαρσίῳ ποδὶ* would represent explicitly the cathartic effect of an ecstatic Dionysiac dancing upon the mental disorder of Creon, Antigone and Haimon (i.e. *βιαία νόσος*), equated by the chorus with the political strife afflicting their city. Cf. also Furley–Bremer 2001: 2.278.

Iacchus, dwelling exalted here in your abode,  
 Iacchus, Iacchus,  
 come to this meadow to dance  
 with your reverent followers,  
 brandishing about your brow  
 a fruitful, a burgeoning  
 garland of myrtle, and stamping  
 with bold foot in our licentious,  
 fun-loving worship,  
 that is richly endowed by the Graces, a dance  
 pure and holy to pious initiates.<sup>90</sup>

In this passage, the chorus of the initiates invokes Iacchus, the Eleusinian Dionysus – the appeal being expressed this time with the imperatival, not infinitival, aoristic form ἐλθέ – and explicitly asks him to join their dance (χορεύσων). Such a request is reaffirmed a few lines below, by the mention of the divine foot (θρασεῖ ποδὶ), this again being an instrumental dative and followed by an adjective. In this case, the meaning of the adjective (‘bold’, ‘saucy’) is justified by the character of the dance itself, which seems to take place in the context of a Bacchic revelry (cf. also the adjective ἀκόλαστον). Even from a syntactical standpoint, this ode closely recalls *PMG* 871. In Aristophanes’ chorus, three circumstantial participles agree with the verb of motion: the syntagm θρασεῖ ποδὶ is attached to the third one (ἐγκατακρούων). Likewise, in *PMG* 871 the syntagm τῷ βοέῳ ποδὶ completes the meaning of the participle θύων,<sup>91</sup> which is dependent on the main verb of coming.<sup>92</sup> Finally, we also notice the adjective

<sup>90</sup> Trans. Henderson 2002: 73. See Furley–Bremer 2001: 1.364f., 2.363f., 367–369.

<sup>91</sup> The reading δύων, printed in the Teubner edition of Titchener and accepted by Page (cf. apparatus), is likely to be a typographical error for θύων (cf. Furley–Bremer 2001: 2.377; Scullion 2001: 203 n. 3). If we accepted the reading δύων, we should suppose the entrance of the bull-Dionysus into the temple as a sort of catabasis into a Bacchic cave (cf. Del Grande 1962: 26; Bérard 1976: 70f.; *contra* rightly Magnani 2013: 62). On the other hand, the verb θύω, in the sense of ‘to rage’, ‘to seethe’, is particularly indicated for animals: see LSJ<sup>9</sup> s.v. (B). On the irascibility of bulls, cf. also Ath. 2.38e εἰσὶ δ’ οἱ καὶ θυμικοὶ γίνονται· τοιοῦτος δ’ ὁ ταῦρος. Εὐριπίδης (*Bacch.* 743)· ταῦροι δ’ ὕβρισταὶ κεῖς κέρασιν **θυμούμενοι**.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. a similar syntax in *Hymn. Orph.* 53.9–10 **βαῖν’ ἐπὶ** πάνθειον τελετὴν γανόωντι προσώπῳ / εὐιέροις καρποῖσι τελεσσιγόνοισι **βρῦάζων**. Here Dionysus is summoned to join the mystic rite of the worshippers. Similarly, in Eur. *Bacch.* 582–84 ἰὼ ἰὼ, δέσποτα δέσποτα, / μόλε νυν ἡμέτερον ἐς / θίασον, ὃ Βρόμιε Βρόμιε, the god is invoked by the chorus and asked to join their cultic association (ἐς θίασον, cf. ἐς ναόν in *PMG* 871).

ἄγνός – here referred to the ritual dance instead than to the temple (cf. *supra*) – and, more importantly, the presence of the Charites.

This leads to the second expression used self-referentially by the chorus of the women of Elis: σὺν Χαρίτεσσιν. Specifically, the mention of the ritual dancing in *PMG* 871 may be accompanied by the allusion to the performance of the hymn itself through the figure of the Charites. The Charites often appear in the retinue of Greek gods – especially Apollo and Aphrodite – and a special link between them and Dionysus seems to have existed in the very region of Elis.<sup>93</sup> Certainly, the mention of the Charites in *PMG* 871 may well be intended to recall their cultic association with Dionysus.<sup>94</sup> However, one may also assign to Χαρίτεσσιν a metaphorical significance, as is implied in many poetic texts of the classical and post-classical period. The Charites can be taken as the ‘grace of poetry’: just as the Muses inspire the poet and his songs, so the Graces give ‘grace’ to them. This pattern is particularly evident in the Pindaric odes, in which the Charites often appear to chair the victory ode and help the poet elaborate his poem. For instance, in Pind. *Nem.* 5.54 ἀνθέων ποιάεντα φέρε στεφανώματα σὺν ξανθαῖς Χάρισσιν, the poet addresses himself and his art so as to proclaim the victory of the master through his songs, who are personified by the Charites. In Pind. *Isthm.* 5.21-2 σὺν Χάρισιν δ’ ἔμολον Λάμπωνος υἱοῖς / τάνδ’ ἐς εὖνομον πόλιν, the poet himself has come to the city of the athlete to celebrate his victory in company with the Charites, who are thus to be interpreted as metonymic of the victory ode itself.<sup>95</sup> Elsewhere in Pindar, the term χάριτες can even act as a synonym of song/poetry.<sup>96</sup> Very interesting in relation to *PMG* 871 is Pind. *Ol.* 13.18-9 ταὶ Διωνύσου πόθεν ἐξέφανεν / σὺν βοηλάτῃ χάριτες διθυράμβῳ. Here, the Διωνύσου χάριτες can be taken as a synonym of the dithyramb, the song of Dionysus *par excellence*,

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<sup>93</sup> Cf. Herodor. *FGrH* 31 F 34a, Paus. 5.14.10. See Halliday 1928: 158f.; Furley–Bremer 2001: 2.376.

<sup>94</sup> This does not necessarily suppose a primitive origin of the text, as is instead stated by Pordomingo 1991: 216 (‘elementos temáticos que como también la presencia de las Gracias hablan de su gran antigüedad y de un rito de fertilidad’).

<sup>95</sup> Similar examples can be found elsewhere in Pindar and in Bacchylides as well. See Pind. *Nem.* 4.6-8 ῥῆμα δ’ ἐργμάτων χρονιώτερον βιοτεύει, / ὅ τι κε σὺν Χαρίτων τύχα / γλῶσσα φρενὸς ἐξέλοι βαθείας, 9.54 εὐχομαι ταύταν ἀρετὰν κελαδεῖσαι σὺν Χαρίτεσσιν, *Pyth.* 9.1-3 ἐθέλω χαλκάσπιδα Πυθιονίκαν / σὺν βαθυζώνοισιν ἀγγέλλων / Τελεσικράτη Χαρίτεσσι γεγωνεῖν, 9.89a-90 Χαρίτων κελαδεννᾶν / μή με λίποι καθαρὸν φέγγος, Bacchyl. 5.9-10 ἧ σὺν Χαρίτεσσι βαθυζώνοις ὑφάνας / ὕμνον, 9.1-2 δόξαν, ὃ χρυσαλάκατοι Χάρι[τ]ες, / πεισίμβροτον δοίητ’, 15.49 φθέγγατ’, εὐπέλοισι κοινώσας Χάρισσιν, 19.5-8 ἰοβλέφαροί τε κ(όρ)αι / φερεστέφανοι Χάριτες / βάλῳσιν ἄμφι τιμὰν / ὕμνοισιν.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. e.g. Pind. *Isthm.* 1.6 ἀμφοτερᾶν τοι χαρίτων σὺν θεοῖς ζεύζω τέλος, 3.8 χρὴ δὲ κωμάζοντ’ ἀγαναῖς χαρίτεσσιν βαστάσαι, 8.16-16a χρὴ δ’ ἐν ἑπταπύλοισι Θήβαις τραφέντα / Αἰγίνα Χαρίτων ἄωτον προνέμειν.

which is defined in the same passage as βοηλάτᾱ ('ox-driving').<sup>97</sup> Apart from Pindar, the Charites as a synonym of poetry occur, for example, in a sympotic elegy of Dionysus Chalcus (fifth century BC),<sup>98</sup> whereas in Theoc. *Id.* 16.5-12 they personify the poet's scrolls, i.e. his own (written) poems.<sup>99</sup>

To sum up, the Charites stand in between ritual and poetry. In *PMG* 871, they can surely be seen to represent the ritual companions of Dionysus. At the same time, however, they may even be taken as personifications of the hymn itself. In this sense, the Charites of *PMG* 871 would match a topos well attested in Greek poetry.<sup>100</sup>

My analysis of *PMG* 871 shows that there is no substantial evidence to consider this text as one of the oldest examples of Greek cult song. The exact date of composition, however, remains open to speculation. We may, of course, imagine that *PMG* 871 originated around the fifth century BC under the influence of mainstream choral lyric and that it in turn influenced contemporary or later poetic compositions. On the other hand, it cannot be ruled out that *PMG* 871 is indeed earlier than all the texts I have adduced above, in which case all the intertextual links shown were realised only in the post-classical life of this hymn. For example, we can assume that the poem began its life at a time when σὺν Χαρίτεσσιν simply had a ritual sense and βοέφ ποδὶ a more rationalist explanation, merely referring to an actual bull sacrificed to Dionysus.<sup>101</sup> Hence, *PMG* 871 would have become more 'literary' in its connotations for later audiences and/or readers only after Pindar and the other texts compared above had made it possible for such connotations to exist.

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<sup>97</sup> Cf. Ieranò 1997: 172, 174.

<sup>98</sup> Dionys. Eleg. fr. 1.1-3 GP ὦ Θεόδωρε, δέχου τήνδε προπινομένην / τὴν ἀπ' ἐμοῦ ποίησιν. ἐγὼ δ' ἐπιδέξια πέμπω / σοὶ πρώτῳ Χαρίτων ἐγκεράσας χάριτας.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. *schol.* Theoc. *Id.* 16.6 Wend. ἡμετέρας χάριτας· τὰ οἰκεῖα ποιήματα. See Bing 1988: 20f.; González 2010: 85-90.

<sup>100</sup> Cf. Harrison 1908: 437 ('The Charites here halt half-way between ritual and poetry. They are half abstract rhythmical graces, half the Charites of an actual cult', cf. also Harrison 1912: 206); Furley–Bremer 2001: 1.372 ('The god is addressed in the guise of the 'worthy bull' that is being led along for sacrifice to the accompaniment of song, σὺν Χαρίτεσσιν').

<sup>101</sup> Rationalist is the explanation of Del Grande (1962: 25f.), who rejects any kind of metaphorical interpretation concerning τῷ βοέφ ποδὶ. Del Grande argues that the syntagm originally referred to the fact that Dionysus, presumably personified by a priest, entered the temple riding the bull that was going to be sacrificed. The physical presence of a sacrificial bull on the occasion of the performance of *PMG* 871 may be a concrete possibility (cf. Furley–Bremer 2001: 1.372, 2.375), which, however, does not necessarily exclude a metaphorical meaning of the syntagm.

However, the focus here has not been to dwell on the chronological relationship – which is impossible to define – between *PMG* 871 and its ‘literary’ parallels. What can be inferred more cogently is that, regardless of its original composition and meaning, *PMG* 871 contains expressive potentialities that can be interpreted in the light of the living choral culture of the classical period. This also means that *PMG* 871 and its texture can (and could) be interpreted from literary perspectives, since the linguistic and stylistic features of this hymn can be related to the same or similar traits that appear in texts handed down as literature at least since the Hellenistic period.

The view of *PMG* 871 as a literary text, when analysed with a primary focus on its intrinsic formal properties, is confirmed by the very source that quotes the song. In his discussion, Plutarch is not at all interested in the performative aspects of *PMG* 871; rather he is investigating the specific meaning of the expression βοέω ποδὶ (36.299a-b Διὰ τί τὸν Διόνυσον αἱ τῶν Ἡλείων γυναῖκες ὕμνοῦσαι παρακαλοῦσι βοέω ποδὶ παραγίνεσθαι πρὸς αὐτάς;). The author, therefore, provides four interpretations, which either refer to what can be considered, already by Plutarch’s times, as a tradition of literary texts, or which allude to scholarly doctrines.<sup>102</sup> The first hypothesis concerns the poetic image of the tauriform Dionysus, which, as explained by Plutarch, is often evoked through the epithets βουγενῇ (‘ox-born’) and ταῦρον (‘bull’).<sup>103</sup> The second directly involves Homer (ὁ ποιητής), who uses bull-related epithets (such as βοῶπις or βουγάϊος) to metaphorically indicate the ‘prominence’ of something: in this sense, βοέω ποδὶ should be intended as ‘with mighty foot’.<sup>104</sup> The third interpretation instead considers the syntagm at issue to be an allegory about the foot of the ox being harmless – as opposed to the horns that are dangerous<sup>105</sup> – while the last one is more oriented towards an orthodox Euhemerist doctrine, according to which the figure of bull-Dionysus would identify

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<sup>102</sup> Plut. *Quaest. Graec.* 36.299a-b πότερον ὅτι καὶ βουγενῇ προσαγορεύουσι καὶ ταῦρον ἔνιοι τὸν θεόν; ἢ τῷ μεγάλῳ ποδί βοέω λέγουσιν, ὥς βοῶπιν ὁ ποιητὴς τὴν μεγαλόφθαλμον καὶ βουγάιον τὸν μέγανυχον; ἢ μᾶλλον, ὅτι τοῦ βοὸς ὁ ποὺς ἀβλαβής ἐστι τὸ δὲ κέρασφόρον ἐπιβλαβές, οὕτω τὸν θεὸν παρακαλοῦσι πρᾶον ἐλθεῖν καὶ ἄλυπον; ἢ ὅτι καὶ ἀρότου καὶ σπόρου πολλοὶ τὸν θεὸν ἀρχηγὸν γεγονέναι νομίζουσι; Cf. Halliday 1928: 153f.; Carrano 2007: 148f.

<sup>103</sup> On the literary topos of bull-Dionysus, see *supra* n. 85.

<sup>104</sup> In Homer, the attribute βοῶπις (‘ox-eyed’ for ‘large eyed’) is mostly referred to Hera (cf. e.g. *Il.* 1.551, 4.50), but is also used for mortal women (*Il.* 3.144, 7.10, 17.40). The same attribute is also adopted by other poets such as Hesiod (*Theog.* 355), Bacchylides (11.99, 17.110) and Pindar (*Pyth.* 3.91). The second attribute βουγάϊος (‘braggart’), instead, occurs in Homer only in *Il.* 13.824 and *Od.* 18.79.

<sup>105</sup> This ‘rather puerile allegorizing [...] is in accordance with the theological methods of Graeco-Roman speculation’ (Halliday 1928: 153). Cf. e.g. Cornutus *Theol. Graec.* 30 (on the Dionysian mythology).

Dionysus himself as the inventor of the plough and sowing.<sup>106</sup> Clearly, Plutarch is not treating *PMG* 871 as a lowbrow product to be firmly distinguished from literature and scholarship. On the contrary, he discusses this text as a textualised song, giving to it thoroughgoing exegetical attention with respect to its manifold literary history.

In light of these considerations, a notion of folksong based on both contexts of origin and composition and criteria of sophistication proves to be inadequate. We do not know when *PMG* 871 was composed and by whom, but a primordial, pre-literary origin cannot be determined simply by preconceived and negatively inclined standards. Moreover, the text in itself contains various elements that can be read either as additional meanings which the poem could have carried in the classical period due to its intertextual links, or (if the hymn is classical) as the shared poetics of authorial and anonymous song.<sup>107</sup> A more appreciative and literarily informed interpretation of it stands in accordance with the approach I have endeavoured to pursue throughout this dissertation. On the one hand, folklore does not necessarily go hand-in-hand with primitivism. On the other hand, the search for peculiar formal traits, which belong exclusively to the genre of folksong, is a chimaera. As a result, if we want to give *PMG* 871 a folkloric dimension, we need to look at its contexts of use. The details of its performative setting remain unknown (cf. *supra* n. 66). However, it can be easily supposed that *PMG* 871 was part of a traditional and recurrent festival in Elis, in which its performance ('synchronic reperformance') represented not so much the musical climax of the event, but rather accompanied the religious ritual embedded in that festival. *PMG* 871 was essentially performed as a liturgical hymn that invoked the presence of Dionysus, and thus was used and perceived mainly from a functional-occasional perspective. The anonymous transmission of the text confirms that the name of its author was not an essential element of this performance: *PMG* 871 belonged to the religious community at Elis and as such was perceived anonymously (invalid 'author-function'). All these aspects identify *PMG* 871 as a (traditional and anonymous) folk song within its specific performative context.

## 4.2 Popular motifs in folk songs

In this second section, I shall present three texts which convey three different but widely recurring motifs in antiquity. In *PMG* 854 (§4.2.1), which relates the conception of Zeus as the agent of rain, and in *PMG* 870 (§4.2.3), which records men's alternating strength across

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<sup>106</sup> Cf. e.g. Diod. Sic. 3.64.

<sup>107</sup> On this latter point, cf. also *PMG* 851 (§4.1.1).

different phases of life, the ‘popularity’ of the content is conveyed through a basic syntactical structure and simple formal elements. In *PMG* 860 (§4.2.2), which touches on the motif of Apollo as the Sun-God (Helios), another kind of ‘popularity’ can be identified, which was first described by the ancient sources and which refers to the ‘mass consumption’ of the text. But these components of ‘mass consumption’, ‘popularity’ in terms of content, and formal simplicity in which the same content is expressed do not automatically identify these three texts as folk songs. Rather, in what follows I shall show that these factors reveal contexts of use and consumption within which a particular mode of perception, which I have defined as ‘folkloric’, can be detected.

#### 4.2.1 Zeus raining (*PMG* 854)

EDD *Carm. pop.* 8 Neri = 854 Campbell = *PMG* 854 = 14 Edmonds.

FONS M. Aur. *Med.* 5.7 Εὐχὴ Ἀθηναίων·

ὕσον ὕσον ὦ φίλε  
 Ζεῦ κατὰ τῆς ἀρούρας  
 τῆς Ἀθηναίων καὶ τῶν πεδίων.

ἦτοι οὐ δεῖ εὐχεσθαι ἢ οὕτως ἀπλῶς καὶ ἐλευθέρως.

Numeri: lk | ar | incertus. Cf. Norden 1974: 46; West, *GM* 147.

|| 3 τῆς Ἀθηνῶν καὶ <κατὰ> τῆς Πεδίων Edmonds (Πεδιῶν iam Bergk 1853: 1040): † τῆς Ἀθηναίων καὶ τῶν πεδίων † Page, Campbell : τ. Α. <τε> καὶ / τῶν πεδί(οις ἐνοίκ)ων dub. Page | τοῦ πεδίου Wilamowitz<sup>3</sup>.

Rain, rain, O dear  
 Zeus, over the ploughland,  
 that of the Athenians and their plains.

A certain simplicity in style and content can surely be detected in *PMG* 854, but I shall show that this simplicity neither need be construed as being of base quality nor necessarily refers to preconceived (lowbrow and primitive) contexts of origin and production. More positively understood, the widespread motif of Zeus raining – expressed by *PMG* 854 in very basic and essential terms – will help us determine a mode of reception that legitimately defines the text as a folk prayer, regardless of its original contexts of composition.

*PMG* 854, an Athenian prayer to Zeus for rain, is quoted by the philosopher-emperor Marcus Aurelius (*Med.* 5.7). He concludes his thought by saying that ‘one ought either not to

pray at all, or else to pray like this: with this kind of simplicity and freedom’ (ἀπλῶς καὶ ἐλευθέρως). In so doing, Marcus aims to take sides in the long-standing quarrel between the choice of pursuing literary or rhetorical studies and philosophy. He is commending *PMG* 854 for its simplicity in order to show how texts that are non-complex from both a formal and content-centred perspective also tend to be morally pure, as opposed to more elaborate forms of prayers and hymns. Marcus takes pride in not being a sophist, but in pursuing a purely ethical philosophy, in the Stoic manner.<sup>108</sup> For this reason, he explicitly rejects the superficiality of rhetoric in favour of a simple style, the latter being associated with frankness and openness.<sup>109</sup> If one goes beyond Marcus’ radical view, motivated by the cultural climate of his time, a question spontaneously arises: what does the simplicity of *PMG* 854 truly tell us about the nature of this text?

*PMG* 854 conveys a simple message in a basic texture, composed of three essential elements: the invocation of Zeus, the request for rain and the beneficiary of such a request (the Athenians and their lands). Whether directly or indirectly influenced by the inclusion of the text in the *carmina popularia*, modern scholars have sometimes taken the simplicity of *PMG* 854 as an objective criterion of primitiveness.<sup>110</sup> However, the composition date remains open to speculation, nor can we confirm that *PMG* 854 is a very early text on the basis of the available information. For example, Pordomingo (1996: 471) has pinpointed the characteristically ‘folk’

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<sup>108</sup> In at least three passages, Marcus clearly refuses the poetry (ποιητική) and the works studied in the curricula of rhetoricians: *Med.* 1.7.2, 1.17.4 and 1.17.9. Therefore, Marcus is likely to be contrasting *PMG* 854 with these ‘highly sophisticated’ products upon which the sophists of the time based their vocational education. However, it is not far-fetched to assume that Marcus is here also referring to something more specific. For example, we might think of the prose hymns that Aelius Aristides (*Or.* 37-46), a pioneer of the Second Sophistic and contemporary with Marcus, had composed as ‘un moyen péremptoire de defender et de réhabiliter la rhétorique face aux attaques des philosophes’ (Goeken 2012: 318, see also *ibid.* pp. 100-104, 306-318).

<sup>109</sup> Cf. Rutherford 1989: 39-44; 80-89; Di Stefano 2006: 46-70. See also Aubriot-Sévin (1992: 36 n. 9, 241f.), who interprets ἐλευθέρως as ‘libre de toute contrainte de rhétorique’. A slightly different interpretation of the passage, but still discussing Marcus’ simplicity in moral and ethical terms, is that of Farquharson (1944: 647). In his view, Marcus would be praising who prays in an unselfish way, without any personal interests. The adverb ἀπλῶς should thus be understood in the sense of ‘generally, i.e. without limiting the petition to a special request or to oneself’, while ἐλευθέρως would mean ‘not as a slave nor as one trafficking with the gods’ (*ibid.*).

<sup>110</sup> Cf. e.g. Rutherford 1989: 192 (‘The emperor was capable of admiring the simple beauty of an old Greek prayer’); Pulleyn 1997: 149 (discussed *supra* §4.0); Chapot-Laurot 2001: 162 (‘il y a une confiance presque amoureuse (φίλε) vis-à-vis de la puissance divine et aussi beaucoup d’insistance (remarquer l’anaphore) dans cette requête pour la pluie fécondante et nécessaire: on n’est pas loin de ce que certains ont appelé “la prière du primitif”’).



simplicity of *PMG* 854 in the use of the adjective φίλος addressed to Zeus: ὦ φίλε Ζεῦ. In Pordomingo's view, the use of similar adjectives, with their affective value,<sup>111</sup> is typical of folk poetry.<sup>112</sup> She also observes, once again as a characteristic of folk poetry, the absence of adjectives with a more sophisticated meaning.<sup>113</sup> Pordomingo, therefore, adopts the simplicity criterion in order to draw a sharp line of demarcation between sub-literary texts (in this case *PMG* 854) and more sophisticated forms of literary poetry. In what follows, I will argue, instead, that the basic style and the simple content expressed by the Athenian prayer do not indicate that this text is a folk form of poetry in direct opposition to 'high' literature. More effectively, the formal aspects of *PMG* 854 and its content point to a certain mode of use and perception according to which the prayer can be interpreted from folkloric perspectives. Firstly, a careful analysis of the adjective φίλος will show that its use cannot be confined to folklore but is also found in the Greek literary tradition. Then I shall focus on the motif of Zeus raining to show how the 'popularity' of this topos makes it plausible that this prayer in antiquity was used and reused in multiple (everyday) contexts and thus perceived mainly from a functional-occasional standpoint. In this sense, *PMG* 854 can be considered a folk prayer.

In Greek literature, the adjective φίλος addressed to a god is not rare and generally conveys 'un sentiment de respectueuse affection'.<sup>114</sup> In Aesch. *Ag.* 515, for example, the herald addresses Hermes as φίλον κήρυκα, while in *Sept.* 154 and 159, the Chorus sings Ἄρτεμι φίλα and ὦ φίλ' Ἄπολλον respectively. In Eur. *Hipp.* 82, Hippolytus offers a solemn prayer to Artemis and addresses the goddess as ὦ φίλη δέσποινα.<sup>115</sup> Later on, it is Artemis herself who addresses her dying devotee and highlights his great fondness for her: ὦ τλήμων, ἔστι, σοί γε φιλάττη θεῶν (1394).<sup>116</sup> In Men. *Sam.* 444 the master of the house cries χαῖρ', Ἄπολλον φίλτατε, 'in excitement while looking at the statue which stands in front of his house door'.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> On the contrary, Aubriot-Sévin (1992: 36 n. 9) prefers the translation 'notre' to 'cher', 'pour éviter les connotations affectives, et pour essayer de rendre l'idée d'appartenance à une même collectivité qui marque cet adj.'

<sup>112</sup> Another example provided by Pordomingo is *carm. pop.* *PMG* 876b ἔξεχ' ὦ φίλ' ἥλιε.

<sup>113</sup> See Pordomingo (1996: 471): 'La sobriedad se observa asimismo en el uso que la poesía popular hace del adjetivo, con ausencia de aquellos que signifiquen ornato superfluo y uso frecuente en cambio del adjetivo afectivo.'

<sup>114</sup> See van Groningen 1966: 148.

<sup>115</sup> On the formal aspects of this prayer, see Nenci 2004: 44-47.

<sup>116</sup> For the use of the superlative form, cf. also ὦ Ζεῦ φίλτατε in Ar. *Eccl.* 378 and Philem. fr. 74.7 KA.

<sup>117</sup> Burkert 1985: 274 ('Regularity of custom brings familiarity. A Greek can address a god as his dear god, *philos*').

Similar addresses are frequent in amatory epigrams: cf. Asclep. *AP* 5.153.4 (= *HE* 823) Κύπρι φίλη (cf. also Asclep. [or Posidipp.] *AP* 5.202.5 = *HE* 978 and Mel. *AP* 6.162.2 = *HE* 4057), Asclep. *AP* 5.167.6 (= *HE* 875) Ζεῦ φίλε, σίγησον (cf. *infra*), Antip. Thess. *AP* 5.109.4 (= *GPh* 362) ἦ ῥα μάτην, Ζεῦ φίλε, βοῶς ἐγένου.<sup>118</sup> Sometimes, Greek poets also used φίλος in relation to gods to express a more or less veiled irony within parodic contexts: cf. Hippon. fr. 42.1 D.<sup>2</sup> Ἑρμῆ φίλ' Ἑρμῆ, Μαιαδεῦ, Κυλλήνιε,<sup>119</sup> Thgn. 373 Ζεῦ φίλε, θαυμάζω σε,<sup>120</sup> Eup. fr. 305 KA ἀλλ' ὦ φίλε Ζεῦ κατάχυτλον τὴν ῥῖν' ἔχεις, Callim. *Epigr.* 6.4 Pf. (= *HE* 1296) Κρεωφύλω, Ζεῦ φίλε, τοῦτο μέγα.<sup>121</sup>

Certainly, the adjective φίλος used to address gods may somehow be considered a mark of formal simplicity, expressing familiarity and a feeling of fondness. Nevertheless, such a stylistic trait is not a prerogative of a particular subset of texts, which, for this reason, should be set apart and labelled as 'folk', in opposition to literary poetry. The criteria of sophistication are too elusive and unsatisfactory to define a text in terms of folklore. More fruitfully, the internal and formal features may sometimes reveal a modality of use and perception that is more useful for such a scope. In this respect, let us take a look at the motif of Zeus as god of rain, which occurs in *PMG* 854 (ῥέον ῥέον), but which was also widespread at various levels in Greek culture, to such an extent that it was even adopted by renowned poets.

Broadly speaking, cults connected with rainmaking rituals were an important aspect of classical religion. Depending on regions and periods, rainmaking rituals could be more or less widespread and permeate different levels of social life in antiquity.<sup>122</sup> To quote only two examples, the atthidographer Philochorus describes the Athenians as making offerings to the Seasons and praying to the goddesses for good weather and seasonable rains.<sup>123</sup> Two words have also been transmitted to us: ὤε κύε, which purports to be a ritual charm uttered in the

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Guichard 2004: 253; Sens 2011: 95.

<sup>119</sup> See Degani (2007: 100): 'Da notare la disinibita, confidenziale allocuzione ad Ermete (cf. fr. 2), che era pur sempre una divinità.'

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Labarbe 1980: 143; Garzya 1989: 291.

<sup>121</sup> See Pagōnarē-Antōniou 1997: 112.

<sup>122</sup> Cf. Morgan 1901 and Håland 2001 (who at pp. 226f. cites *PMG* 854 as a children's song, but without providing any reason for such a statement). The former lists and comments on a series of Greek and Roman references to rainmaking rituals and gods, whereas the latter tries to throw new light upon ancient Greek rainmaking rituals through a comparative approach with the magical practices of Modern Greek farmers.

<sup>123</sup> *Ap.* Ath. 14.656a Ἀθηναῖοι δ', ὥς φησι Φιλόχορος (*FGrH* 328 F 173), ταῖς Ὠραις θύοντες οὐκ ὀπτῶσιν, ἀλλ' ἔψουσι τὰ κρέα, παραιτούμενοι τὰς θεὰς ἀπείργειν τὰ περισκελῆ καύματα καὶ τοὺς αὐχμούς, μετὰ δὲ τῆς συμμέτρου θερμασίας καὶ ὑδάτων ὥραιων ἐκτελεῖν τὰ φυόμενα. Cf. Morgan 1901: 85f.

[ **βρέχε γαιῖαν,**  
καρπῶ [ὅπ]ως βρί[θη καὶ ἐν]ὶ σταχύεσσι τεθίλῃ.  
τ(αὐτ)ά [σε] Μητρεόδωρος ἐγὼ λίτομαι, Κρονίδα Ζεῦ,  
ἄμφι τεοῖς βωμοῖσιν ἐπήρρατα(!) θύματα ῥέζων.

Still in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, we find Pausanias' accounts of the worship of Zeus as rain-bringer (Ζεὺς ὑέτιος or ὄμβριος).<sup>127</sup> It is also worth mentioning the historian's description of a statue of Earth, which was placed in front of the north side of the Parthenon and which he interpreted as begging Zeus for rain: Paus. 1.24.3 ἔστι δὲ καὶ Γῆς ἄγαλμα ἱκετευούσης ὕσαι οἱ τὸν Δία, εἴτε αὐτοῖς ὄμβρου δεῖσαν Ἀθηναίους εἴτε καὶ τοῖς πᾶσιν Ἑλλήσι συμβὰς ἀνχμός.<sup>128</sup> Finally, the motif of Zeus raining is also borrowed by amatory epigrams,

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where the bad weather for which Zeus is responsible metaphorically represents the lover's hardships. For instance, in Asclep. *AP* 5.167.6 (= *HE* 875) Ζεῦ φίλε, σίγησον· καὐτὸς ἐρᾶν ἔμαθες, the god is asked to end the bad weather (literally, 'to be silent'), that is to say, to stop his hostile behaviour.<sup>129</sup>

This overview shows that the motif of 'Zeus as rain-god' was widely established in literary discourse in ancient Greece. As we have already seen, in *PMG* 854 this motif is expressed in the most essential terms. In virtue of both the 'popularity' of its content and the simplicity of its form (making it easy to remember and reperform), *PMG* 854 is likely to have been widely and frequently used in ancient Athens. In other words, *PMG* 854 is a prayer that was arguably part of Athenian everyday life and transmitted in the cultural discourse of most Athenians at every social level. The contexts in which this prayer was performed remain unknown, but a large variety of uses and multiple purposes can be assumed, from private prayer to public worship. Most importantly, in these contexts, *PMG* 854 was used and perceived mainly from a functional-occasional perspective, whether performed as an accompaniment to liturgical ceremonies or recited when praying alone. In either case, we can speak of 'synchronic reperformances' and in this sense *PMG* 854 can be considered a traditional prayer, one that was performed in recurrent traditional events with the function of worshipping Zeus and asking him for rain. Moreover, the anonymous transmission seems to confirm that *PMG* 854 did not require any kind of authorship or authority in the act of performance. In this case, it can be said that the 'author-function' of the text is non-operative: the Athenian prayer indeed belonged to the various religious communities that would perform it. On account of these considerations, which give their proper due to the contexts of usage and reception, *PMG* 854 is interpretable as a folk (traditional and anonymous) prayer, regardless of its contexts of origin and composition as well as its intrinsic formal properties.

#### 4.2.2 Apollo-Sun (*PMG* 860)

EDD *Carm. pop.* 14 Neri = 860 Campbell = *PMG* 860 = 52 Diehl = 9 Smyth = 12 Bergk<sup>4,3</sup> = 16 Bergk<sup>2</sup>.

FONS Heraclit. *All.* 6.6 ὅτι μὲν τοίνυν ὁ αὐτὸς Ἀπόλλων ἡλίω, καὶ θεὸς εἰς δυσὶν ὀνόμασι κοσμεῖται, σαφὲς ἡμῖν ἔκ τε τῶν μυστικῶν λόγων, οὓς αἱ ἀπόρρητοι τελεταὶ θεολογοῦσι, καὶ τὸ δημῶδες ἄνω καὶ κάτω θρυλούμενον·

ἥλιος Ἀπόλλων, ὁ δέ γ' Ἀπόλλων ἥλιος.

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<sup>129</sup> Let us also notice the adjective φίλος addressed to Zeus (cf. *supra*). Rightfully, Sens (2011: 95) states that the connection with *PMG* 854 'is too slight to suggest that Asclep. has that prayer specifically in mind'.

The Sun is Apollo and Apollo the Sun.

*PMG* 860 is a song refrain that invokes the figure of Apollo-Sun. The source (Heraclit. *All.* 6.6) refers to it as δημώδης. The ancient connotation of this adjective in the sense of ‘popular’, ‘demotic’ – which will be confirmed in the passage at hand – leads us to reflect on the hermeneutic basis on which the view of *PMG* 860 as a folk song can be founded. This kind of ‘popularity’ of *PMG* 860 (implying as it does a variability of purpose and ‘mass consumption’) and the ‘popularity’ of its content reveal contexts of use and consumption within which the refrain can be considered from folkloric perspectives.

As already discussed in the introductory chapter (§1.2.1.ii), the adjective δημώδης is not to be intended merely to denote something ‘famous’, ‘well-known’, but demotic in the sense of ‘mass consumed’. With this meaning, the term is also adopted by Heraclitus (first/second century AD) when describing *PMG* 860 in his *Homeric Problems* (6.6):

That Apollo is identical with the Sun, and that one god is honoured under two names, is confirmed both by mystical doctrines taught by secret initiations and by the popular and widely quoted line, ‘the sun’s Apollo, and Apollo the sun’.<sup>130</sup>

Heraclitus is saying that the identification of Apollo and the Sun is not only attested in a *specific* mystical context, but it is also widespread *at every level* of Greek life and culture, as testified by the ‘popular’ refrain *PMG* 860.<sup>131</sup> Therefore, *PMG* 860 is here perceived not so much as (or at least not only as) a refrain known far and wide, but more specifically, as a refrain that is used, reused and overused by ordinary people in multiple contexts and for varied purposes. In turn, the sense that *PMG* 860 was a mass-consumed text is fully justified by the widespread ‘popularity’ of its content. The identification of Apollo and the sun is indeed a well-established topos in Greek literature and thought.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Transl. Russell 2005: 13. For the Greek text, see FONS. On Heraclitus and his work on Homer, see also Pontani 2005. The phrase ἄνω καὶ κάτω θρυλούμενον is generally intended as ‘which can be heard everywhere’, while according to Neri (2003: 219) it would refer to *PMG* 860 being a palindrome.

<sup>131</sup> Cf. also Pontani (2005: 187): ‘Riferendosi prima alle dottrine misteriche [...] e subito dopo a un canto popolare, Eraclito vuole indicare che Apollo è inteso come il Sole a tutti i livelli della vita e della cultura dei Greci.’

<sup>132</sup> Cf. e.g. Theag. 8 A 2 DK, Parm. 28 A 20 DK, Emp. 31 A 23 DK, Telesill. *PMG* 718 (*ap.* Ath. 14.619b, but see Lambin 1992: 329f.), Eur. *Phaeth.* fr. 781.11-13 K., Timoth. fr. 800 Hordern, Pl. *Leg.* 945e, Callim. *Hecale*

In the various (everyday) contexts in which it was used, *PMG* 860 was essentially performed to worship and invoke the common figure of Apollo-Sun and thus perceived mainly from a functional-occasional perspective. In view of this mode of use, *PMG* 860 can be seen as a folk refrain, regardless of its contexts of origin and composition. For instance, Usener (1868: 373f.) had argued that *PMG* 860 derives either from Euripides or from New Comedy. Accordingly, on the basis of the assumed ‘literary’ authorship, he suggested that the text should be removed from the collection of *carmina popularia*. In contrast, but still unconvincingly, Bergk (1882: 659) firmly rejected Usener’s hypothesis in order to preserve the supposed folkloric – and so non-literary – origin of the fragment, and later scholars such as Cerrato (1885: 220) and Lambin (1992: 329) have agreed with Bergk’s view. My conceptualisation of folksong now allows us to go beyond this rigid and artificial dichotomy between ‘anonymous’ and ‘authorial’ that is based on pre-established contexts of origin and composition. We do not know who originally composed *PMG* 860, but whoever its author was, it can be said that the author’s name was irrelevant for performative purposes. The refrain to Apollo-Sun is anonymous not because it is a folk song *per se*, nor is a folk song such due to its intrinsic anonymity. *PMG* 860 represents a song refrain that was used and perceived anonymously (invalid ‘author-function’); in other words, it was performed according to folkloric modes of use and perception.

#### 4.2.3 Three phases of life (*PMG* 870)

EDD *Carm. pop.* 24 Neri = 870 Campbell = *PMG* 870 = 24 Edmonds = 17 Diehl = 13 Smyth = 18 Bergk<sup>4,3</sup> = 17 Bergk<sup>2</sup> = 10 Bergk<sup>1</sup> = 27 Schneidewin.

FONT (I) [Plut.] *Apophth. (Inst.) Lac.* 15.238a-b τριῶν οὖν χορῶν ὄντων κατὰ τὰς τρεῖς ἡλικίας καὶ συνισταμένων ἐν ταῖς ἑορταῖς, ὁ μὲν τῶν γερόντων ἀρχόμενος ἦδεν·

ἀμές ποκ’ ἦμες ἄλκιμοι νεανῖαι·

εἶτα ὁ τῶν ἀκμαζόντων ἀνδρῶν ἀμειβόμενος ἔλεγεν·

ἀμὲς δέ γ’ εἰμές· αἱ δὲ λῆς, αὐγάσδεο.

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fr. 103, Cornutus *Theol. Graec.* 32, Eratosth. [Cat.] 24 [= *OF* ...], Plut. *De Pyth. or.* 400c-d, *De def. or.* 434f, 438d, *De E ap. Delphos* 386b, 393c-d, *De lat. viv.* 1130a, Festus *Gloss. Lat.* 420.23-25, Men. *Rhet.* 438.11-13, Julian. 4.149c-d, Macrobian. *Sat.* 1.18, *Orph.* 102 F, 323 F Bernabé. On these and other references, see Cerrato 1885: 219-221; Boyancé 1966; Russell-Wilson 1981: 352f.; Furley-Bremer 2001: 2.152; Rutherford 2001: 198 and n. 32; Horden 2002: 255; Neri 2003: 218f., 221; Pàmias 2004: 171f. n. 211; Pontani 2005: 186f.; Seaford 2005: 603-606; Hollis 2009: 291; (Johnston and) Graf 2013: 217.

ὁ δὲ τρίτος ὁ τῶν παίδων·

ἀμέες δέ γ' ἐσσόμεσθα πολλῶ κάρρονες.

|| (II) Plut. *Lyc.* 21.3 τριῶν γάρ χορῶν κατὰ τὰς τρεῖς ἡλικίας συνισταμένων ἐν ταῖς ἐορταῖς, ὁ μὲν τῶν γερόντων ἀρχόμενος ἦδεν· [v. 1], ὁ δὲ τῶν ἀκμαζόντων ἀμειβόμενος ἔλεγεν· [v. 2], ὁ δὲ τρίτος ὁ τῶν παίδων· [v. 3] || (III) Plut. *Laud. ips.* 15.544e-f διὸ καὶ τῶν ἐν Λακεδαιμόνι χορῶν ἄδουσιν οἱ μὲν τῶν γερόντων· [v. 1], οἱ δὲ τῶν παίδων· [v. 3], οἱ δὲ τῶν νεανίσκων· [v. 2], καλῶς καὶ πολιτικῶς τοῦ νομοθέτου τὰ πλησίον καὶ οἰκεῖα παραδείγματα τοῖς νέοις δι' αὐτῶν τῶν ἐργασμένων ἐκτιθέντος || (IV) *schol.* Pl. *Leg.* 633a Gr. ἦσαν δὲ γ' χοροὶ παρὰ Λάκωσιν, νέων, ἀνδρῶν, πρεσβυτῶν, καὶ ἦδον οἱ μὲν γέροντες· [v. 1], οἱ δὲ νεανίσκοι· [v. 2], ὁ τῶν παίδων· [v. 3] || (V) Zen. *Ath.* 2.92 (Bühler 1999: 479-487) ≡ vulg. 1.82 (1.28.3-5 *CPG*) ἄμες (Ath. : ἄμμ. vulg.) ποθ' ἡμες (Ath. : ποτ' ἡμ. vulg.)· λακωνικὴ ἐστὶν αὕτη (λ. ἡ παροιμία vulg.). μέμνηται δὲ αὐτῆς Σωσίβιος ἐν τῷ *Περὶ ἐθῶν* (*FGrH* 595 F 8) καὶ φησιν ὅτι οἱ πρεσβύτεροι (μέμνηται-πρ. Ath.: οἱ γὰρ πρ. vulg.) ἐν Λακεδαιμόνι χορεύοντες τοῦτο ἐπέλεγον· ἄμες (Ath. : ἄμμ. vulg.) ποθ' ἡμες (Ath. : ποτ' ἡμ. vulg.)· ἀντὶ τοῦ· ἡμεῖς ποτε ἦμεν (ἀντὶ-ἦμεν om. Ath.) || (VI) Diogenian. 2.30 (1.199.13-200.3 *CPG*) ἄμμες ποτ' ἦμεν· Λακωνικὴ παραβολή, ἀντὶ τοῦ, ἡμεῖς ποτ' ἦμεν. τριῶν γάρ χορῶν ὄντων, ὁ μὲν τῶν παλαιῶν τοῦτ' ἔλεγεν· ὁ δὲ τῶν νεωτέρων καὶ ἀκμαζόντων· [v. 2]· ὁ δὲ τῶν νηπίων καὶ οὐπω ἀκμαζόντων· [v. 3] || (VII) Apost. 2.72 (2.282.2-9 *CPG*) ἄμμες πότ' ἡμες ἄλκιμοι νεανία· Λακωνικὴ ἡ παραβολὴ ἀντὶ τοῦ, ἡμεῖς ποτ' ἦμεν· τριῶν γάρ χορῶν ὄντων κατὰ τὰς τρεῖς ἡλικίας καὶ συνισταμένων ἐν ταῖς ἐορταῖς, ὁ μὲν τῶν γερόντων ἀρχόμενος τοῦτ' ἔλεγεν· ὁ δὲ τῶν νεωτέρων καὶ ἀκμαζόντων· [v. 2]· ὁ δὲ τῶν νηπίων καὶ οὐπω ἀκμαζόντων· [v. 3].

Numeri: 3ia.

|| **1-3** ἀμέες Bergk<sup>1,4</sup> : ἄμες (vel ἄμ.) I, III, V(Ath.) : ἄμμες II, V(vulg.), VI, VII: ἡμεῖς IV || **1** ποκ' II : ποτ' testt. pl. : ποθ' V(Ath.) | ἡμες (vel ἡμ.) I, II, V, VII : ἦμεν III, IV, VI || **2-3** ordinem 3-2 prae. III || **2** δέ γ' εἰμές VI : δ. γ' ἐσμέν I, VII : δ. γ' εἰμέν (vel εἶμ.) II, III : δ' ἔνεσμεν IV : δ. γ' ἡμές Smyth | αἱ δὲ λῆς testt. pl. : ἦν θέλης (vel -εις) III(M<sup>2mgJ</sup>1K) : ἦν δ' ἔλοις IV | ἀνγάσδεο (vel -αζεο) testt. pl. : ἀνγάδεο III(GWXYZ) : πείραν λαβέ II, III(DRSh : πείρ et lac. i), IV (πείρ. λάβ.), VII || **3** κάρρονες testt. pl. : κρείσσονες IV.

Cf. [Plut.] *Cons. ad Apoll.* 15.110b γενναῖον δὲ καὶ τὸ Λακωνικόν· νῦν ἄμμες [ἀμέες hic et infra Bern<sup>ma</sup> cum Cobeto], πρόσθ' ἄλλοι ἐθάλεον, αὐτίκα δ' ἄλλοι, / ὧν ἄμμες [ἀμέες cf. supra] γενεὰν οὐκέτ' ἐποψόμεθα, *Pol.* 4.107 τριχορίαν δὲ Τυρταῖος (test. 15 GP) ἔστησε, τρεῖς Λακῶνων χορούς, καθ' ἡλικίαν ἐκάστην, παῖδας ἀνδρας γέροντας, Diogenian. 5.3 (1.249.6-8 *CPG*) ἦσάν ποτ' ἦσαν ἄλκιμοι Μιλήσιοι· ἐπὶ τῶν ποτὲ εὖ, εἴθ' ἐτέρως γεγονότων. ὁμοία, ἄμμες ποτ' ἡμες, Greg. *Cypr.* 1.48 (1.353.15 *CPG*) ἄμμες ποτ' ἦμεν· ἀεὶ τὰ πέρυσι βελτίω, Apost. 2.73 (2.282.10-1 *CPG*) ἄμμες ποτ' ἦμεν· ἀεὶ τὰ πέρυσι βελτίω· ταπεινούμενοι Ἀθηναῖοι τοῦτ' ἔλεγον.

We were once valiant youths.

And we are right now: look at us if you will.

And we shall even be some day far stronger yet!

In this subsection, I shall apply to *PMG* 870 a notion of folksong based on contexts of use and consumption. The basic structure of *PMG* 870 and the simple, widespread motif it conveys will help us determine a modality of reception that adequately defines this text as a folk song. As a result, the apparent contrast between what *PMG* 870 represents from a textual point of view and its status of folksong will be smoothened out.

*PMG* 870 is composed of a triple refrain that a triple chorus (τριχορία) – divided into the age classes of old men, men in their prime and boys – would sing in alternating voices at Spartan festivals.<sup>133</sup> This text has been included in the collections of the *carmina popularia* since the first editions. Accordingly, as early as the first identifications of *PMG* 870 as a folk song, a romantically-inclined notion has been applied to the text, a notion that is still taken as valid in more recent scholarship. Under the label of *carmen popolare*, *PMG* 870 has generally been discussed as a pre-literary song belonging to a primitive stage in the development of Greek lyric poetry.<sup>134</sup> On this view, *PMG* 870 would represent a prototype of pure and basic poetry, which had inspired and contributed to the formation of the highly-sophisticated works of the great lyric poets of the Greek literary tradition (e.g. Alcman, Stesichorus and Pindar). Moreover, as an anonymous folk song, *PMG* 870 would belong to a stage in which the historical figure of the professional poet had not yet developed. For this reason, modern scholars have firmly rejected any kind of authorship relating to *PMG* 870. In particular, the reliability of Pollux's account (4.107) has been called into question, where the inventor of the Spartan τριχορία – although *PMG* 870 is not explicitly mentioned – is said to be Tyrtaeus.<sup>135</sup>

In my opinion, the attribution of the Spartan τριχορία to Tyrtaeus should not be dismissed lightly, since it yields a valuable clue about how *PMG* 870 was read and discussed

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<sup>133</sup> *PMG* 870 features a complex textual transmission, in which one can pinpoint two main branches: on the one hand, the Plutarchan writings (FONT I-III) and on the other hand, the paroemiographic tradition (FONT V-VII). To these, one needs to add a Platonic scholium (FONS IV). Sosibius' Περὶ ἐθῶν (*FGrH* 595 F 8), quoted by Zenobius (FONS V), may be considered the common source, whether directly or indirectly. On Sosibius of Sparta, historian and antiquarian of the mid-third century BC, see Bayliss 2016.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. e.g. Cerrato 1885: 257-260; Lambin 1992: 196f.; Adrados 2007: 103f., 165.

<sup>135</sup> Poll. 4.107 τριχορίαν δὲ Τυρταῖος (test. 15 GP) ἔστησε, τρεῖς Λακόνων χορούς, καθ' ἡλικίαν ἐκάστην, παῖδας ἄνδρας γέροντας. Bergk (1853: 1031; cf. Bergk 1866: 1303 and 1882: 661) was the first to propose Tyrtaeus as the author of the text. This view has found no favour for the reasons expressed above: cf. e.g. Cerrato 1885: 259 and n. 5; Smyth 1900: 503; Lambin 1992: 197.



in ancient scholarship.<sup>136</sup> To this effect, it must be remembered that some of the sources transmitting *PMG* 870 trace the origin of the custom of the τριχορία to the fundamental reforms that Lycurgus introduced in the Spartan institutions (ca. eighth century BC).<sup>137</sup> But it cannot be ascertained whether *PMG* 870 and its ritual were actually linked to the Lycurgan reforms or not.<sup>138</sup> Taken at face value, this (possibly invented) attribution of the τριχορία reminds us of the anecdote about Cleobulus, tyrant of Lindos, who first introduced the begging ritual of the swallow in Rhodes as part of his financial reforms (§2.1). In this case, the author-composer of the swallow-song (*PMG* 848) is not mentioned, but the author-inventor of the tradition to which the song belongs. The same happens in the case of *PMG* 870. Likewise, the attribution of the Spartan τριχορία to an eminent political figure such as Lycurgus reveals the scholarly interest in the contexts of origin and production surrounding the text. In this sense, *PMG* 870 was read and discussed in antiquity from literary perspectives, which make use of authorial names such as Tyrtaeus and/or of authoritative figures such as Lycurgus in order to legitimate the ritual context in which the text was performed, and to authenticate the same text as a textualised song (i.e. as a literary text). The ancient attributions to Tyrtaeus and Lycurgus cannot be confirmed with certainty but tell us something important about the way *PMG* 870 was analysed and perceived in the literary discourse of antiquity. On the other hand, the stereotyped view that sees *PMG* 870 as a pre-literary, anonymous form of poetry does not really advance our understanding of the text.

Another way to look at the folkloric status of *PMG* 870, one still in light of preconceived contexts of origin and composition, is to pinpoint peculiar formal traits that are seen as excluding the text from the category of literature. Such an approach has been adopted by Pordomingo (1996: 471), who identified in the figure of repetition a fundamental rhetorical

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<sup>136</sup> The Spartan τριχορία, without explicitly referring to *PMG* 870, is also discussed, as an example of the excellence of the Spartan institutions, in both *Pl. Leg.* 664b-d and *Lib. Or.* 64.17 (cf. e.g. Calame 2001: 222f. and n. 59).

<sup>137</sup> The attribution to Lycurgus is clearly stated in *Plut. Laud. ips.* 15.544e-f καλῶς καὶ πολιτικῶς τοῦ νομοθέτου [*scil.* Λυκοῦργος] τὰ πλησίον καὶ οἰκεῖα παραδείγματα τοῖς νέοις δι' αὐτῶν τῶν ἐργασμένων ἐκτιθέντος (FONS III), whereas it can be easily inferred from the biographical account in *Plut. Lyc.* 21.3 (FONS II). This attribution is likely to derive from Sosibius (FONS V). In fact, Sosibius' treatise Περὶ <τῶν ἐν Λακεδαιμονίᾳ ἐθῶν> belongs to the genre of the Spartan πολιτεῖαι, whose main interest was the pre-Hellenistic 'Lycurgan order' (cf. Figueira 2007: 148-150).

<sup>138</sup> The figure of Lycurgus still played an important role in Roman Sparta: it is, thus, not by chance that his biography had been the object of continuous narrative elaborations (see Nafissi 2013 with further references).

device of folk poetry as a whole and listed, among other examples, the grammatical and syntactical parallelism of *PMG* 870. Certainly, the triple refrain is expressed in a basic structure, which is built upon the repetition of the first-person plural of the personal pronoun (ἄμεις), in turn being accompanied by the verb ‘to be’ conjugated in the past, present and future tenses respectively. Nonetheless, the simplicity and repetitive style of *PMG* 870 are not good yardsticks to draw clear-cut boundaries between this text (intended as folk poetry) and literature. As already discussed, simplicity and forms of repetition are not peculiar to a particular genre of poetry but are rhetorical devices that can be found in a wide range of songs and/or texts (cf. §1.1.2.ii and §1.2.2).

Furthermore, Pordomingo tried to detect a specific linguistic form that, in her view, clearly identifies *PMG* 870 as a form of folk poetry in direct opposition to literary forms. She argues that folk poetry as a whole features spoken, non-literary language. To her mind, this is particularly marked in *PMG* 870, where λῆς (l. 2) would represent a remnant of the original folkloric language of the text.<sup>139</sup> As a matter of fact, the verb λῶ occurs in Greek literature, but according to modern scholarship – and Pordomingo follows this view – it would occur at its ‘lower’ levels: Epicharmus, Aristophanes and Theocritus constantly used this verb for their caricatures of Doric speakers.<sup>140</sup> One forgets that this perception is mostly made from an Attic standpoint, which could perceive as ‘non-poetic’ what was perceived as ‘poetic’ from a Doric or other, non-Athenian perspective. The idea that the verb λῶ was used and perceived in order to give a ‘colloquial’ and ‘provincial’ tone to the discourse may be certainly true. But its use in literary contexts could be more widespread and dignified than the extent to which the extant texts may show:<sup>141</sup> the fluid and unstable boundaries between dialects and literary language in antiquity open up this possibility. Therefore, the presence of λῶ in *PMG* 870 is not a sufficient criterion to label this text as a folk song. On the contrary, it is precisely owing to the use of the verb λῶ that *PMG* 870 may partake in the creative use of dialects and glosses that is part and parcel of Greek literature more generally.

In view of such considerations, it is now clear how misleading it may be to apply to *PMG* 870 a notion of folksong founded upon contexts of origin and composition and criteria of sophistication. A less radical conceptualisation, based on contexts of use and consumption, will

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<sup>139</sup> See Pordomingo 1991: 220f.; Pordomingo 1996: 472.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Dover 1971: xxxix and Hunter 1999: 73.

<sup>141</sup> For instance, the verb λῶ has also been conjectured in Thgn. 1.299 (cf. van Groningen 1966: 212) and in a Spartan dedicatory epigram in hexameters (*SEG* 46.400, cf. Cassio 2000).

be helpful in resolving the apparent discrepancy in the perception of *PMG* 870 as both a literary text and a folk song. In this regard, it is useful to explore the message conveyed by the text. *PMG* 870 expresses the widespread popular motif of the alternation of human generations. This motif has been variously declined in antiquity up to modern times. For instance, the paroemiographic tradition quotes *PMG* 870 itself as a comparandum for the proverb ‘we were once’, which indicated a sort of melancholic *laudatio temporis acti*.<sup>142</sup> In [Plut.] *Cons. ad Apoll.* 15.110b, a meaning similar to that expressed in *PMG* 870 is reflected in an elegiac couplet once again from Sparta:

γενναῖον δὲ καὶ τὸ Λακωνικόν·  
 νῦν ἄμμες, πρόσθ’ ἄλλοι ἐθάλεον, αὐτίκα δ’ ἄλλοι,  
 ὦν ἄμμες γενεὰν οὐκέτ’ ἐποψόμεθα

Noble also is the Spartan song:

Here now are we; before us others thrived, and others still  
 straightaway, but we shall never live to see their day.<sup>143</sup>

As already mentioned above, the motif of the alternation of human generations is conveyed by *PMG* 870 in very essential terms, which were arguably easy to remember and perform before a large audience. In the Spartan festivals, the triple refrain was sung to remind everyone of the main stages of life with a positive and optimistic attitude: the valiant men of the past will make way for even more valiant men in the future. Used as a memento of a universal condition, *PMG* 870 is likely to have been perceived mainly from a functional-occasional perspective. In virtue of this modality of use and perception, *PMG* 870 can be considered a folk song.

To clarify this position, I can make a comparison with Alcman’s *Partheneion* 1. Both the choral lyrics of Alcman and the triple refrain of *PMG* 870 represent ritual performances anchored to a specific festival occasion in Sparta. What really differentiates the two texts is the way they were used and perceived in their respective performative contexts. In this sense, the

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<sup>142</sup> Cf. FONT V-VII and comparanda. See also Neri 2003: 231.

<sup>143</sup> Transl. Babbitt 1928: 153. This general idea may also relate to the famous line in *Il.* 6.146 (‘As is the generation of leaves, so is that of humanity’), which is inflected in various ways in archaic and classical literature (and beyond). See e.g. Sider 2001; Stein 2013. The motif of the alternation of human generations is also used in many Latin funerary inscriptions as a *memento mori*: ‘quod fuimus estis, quod sumus vos eritis’ (cf. Bühler 1999: 487; Lelli 2006: 382 n. 102).

textual complexity of Alcman's *Partheneion* 1 seems to have induced (and thus reveals) a more marked independence in its use and perception (cf. §1.3.2). By contrast, the non-complex structure of *PMG* 870 and the common motif it features point to a functional-occasional perspective.

The interpretation of *PMG* 870 as a folk song is, therefore, best grounded in neither its formal aspects nor its anonymous transmission and/or composition. Quite differently, these aspects may reveal a modality of reception on which the conceptualisation of folksong can be founded. For example, the anonymous transmission may indicate that the 'author-function' of the text was irrelevant in its performative contexts, regardless of who originally composed the text (Tyrtaeus?) or who was the first to introduce the custom of the triple chorus (Lycurgus?). *PMG* 870 did not require any kind of authorial/authoritative authentication for the purposes of its performance; in other words, it was perceived as an anonymous (folk) song.

### 4.3 Ritual refrains

In this third and concluding section, I shall discuss four song refrains that can be considered 'folk' on the basis of specific modes of reception in their respective contexts of performance. More specifically, *PMG* 847 and 862 will prove to be post-classical compositions, confirming that folklore does not necessarily coincide with undefined primitivism. *PMG* 864 instead represents a song attached to a school context, and so performed in an institutionalised context but mainly from an occasional-functional perspective. Finally, the analysis of *PMG* 868 will show that the contexts of origin and composition can sometimes be difficult to truly identify and be more complex than expected.

#### 4.3.1 A song for Demeter (*PMG* 847)

EDD *Carm. pop.* 1 Neri = 847 Campbell = *PMG* 847 = 16 Edmonds = 27 Diehl = 13 Bergk<sup>4,3</sup> = 10 Bergk<sup>2</sup>.

FONS Ath. 3.109e-f ἀχαΐνας· τούτου τοῦ ἄρτου μνημονεύει Σῆμος ἐν ἡ' *Δηλιάδος* (*FGrH* 396 F 14) λέγων ταῖς θεσμοφόροις γίνεσθαι. εἰσὶ δὲ ἄρτοι μεγάλοι, καὶ ἑορτὴ καλεῖται Μεγαλάρτια ἐπιλεγόντων τῶν φερόντων·

ἀχαΐνην στέατος ἔμπλεων τράγον.

Numeri: 3ia.

Codd.: AAmbrDBFPMQ.

|| ἀχαΐνην A, conl. Schweighäuser (cl. ἀχαΐνας lemmate in A), prob. Passow, Lobeck : ἀχαΐνην P, edd. pl. : ἀχαΐνην AmbrDFMQ, Ald., Bas. : ἀχαΐνου B | ἔμπλεων Q, Bas., Ald., Casaubon : ἐμπλεῶ (sic) B | τρώγουσα Daléchamp : ἄρτον dub. Casaubon : τραγήμα Politus.

Cf. Eust. *Il.* 265.31f., I 405.7f. v.d.V. καὶ Ἄρτου δέ τινας μεγάλου ἐπιλεγομένου ἑορτὴ ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἐτελεῖτο τὰ Μεγάλάρτια.

Munch the suety bread.

In what follows, the analysis of the performative setting and the meaning of *PMG* 847 will reveal a ritual formula, which was used and perceived mainly from a functional-occasional perspective, as an accompaniment to a specific religious ceremony in honour of Demeter (and her daughter Persephone). Moreover, the linguistical analysis of τράγον will be helpful in dating the composition (and performance) of the text to the Hellenistic age. As a *carmen popolare*, *PMG* 847 is not necessarily to be interpreted as a remotely archaic cult song, but can be seen as part of living folklore in the Hellenistic period.

*PMG* 847 is transmitted in the third book of Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* (109e-f), which is in turn quoting the eighth book of Semus' *Delias* (*Delian Histories* or *Delian Antiquities*).<sup>144</sup> What is described in this passage is the so-called ἀχαιῖνη(ς),<sup>145</sup> a large loaf dressed with fat, which was baked in honour of the *Thesmophoroi* (i.e. Demeter and Kore-Persephone) and carried in procession on the occasion of the 'Large Loaf Festival' (Μεγάλάρτια). Those in charge of carrying such an offering would recite the ritual motto 'munch the suety bread' (*PMG* 847).<sup>146</sup> The mention of the epithet *Thesmophoroi* has led some

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<sup>144</sup> *FGrH* 396 F 14. On Semus of Delos (third century BC), cf. §3.1 n. 24.

<sup>145</sup> The word ἀχαιῖνην is in accusative singular. Athenaeus (and his source) also provides the lemma ἀχαιῖνας, possibly in accusative plural (cf. FONS). Two nominative endings can be supposed (see Tammaro 2000: 661): ἡ ἀχαιῖνη, τῆς -ης (cf. e.g. Schweighäuser 1802: 255; Passow 1812: 81); or ὁ ἀχαιῖνης, τοῦ -ου (cf. e.g. Lobeck 1829: 1064; Rodríguez-Noriega Guillén 1998: 104). Schweighäuser (1801: 425f.) prints ἀχαιῖνας and ἀχαιῖνην, but in the commentary (1802: 256) points out that the second occurrence too should feature two iotas. However, the *Marcianus* (A) already offered the uniform readings ἀχαιῖνας and ἀχαιῖνην. Presumably, Schweighäuser's son – the first to collate the *Marcianus* (preserved in Paris at that time) – had paid attention only to the first occurrence, because it was indeed the only one to oscillate in the manuscript tradition (and consequently in the editors). On the basis of his son's (partial) collation, which confirmed the reading ἀχαιῖνας only in the first occurrence of the term, Schweighäuser senior would have later proposed by conjecture what was instead the actual reading of the manuscript in the second occurrence of the term (ἀχαιῖνην).

<sup>146</sup> As pointed out by Bruneau, 'les porteurs sont, au moins en partie, des homes puisque Sémos dit ἐπιλεγόντων τῶν φερόντων et non ἐπιλεγουσῶν τῶν φερουσῶν' (1970: 290). Although only women were allowed in most Demetriad rituals, male cultic associations are also testified to, cf. Burkert 1985: 245. On the task of carrying bread offering, cf. Ath. 3.111b ἐκαλοῦντο δὲ καὶ ὀβελιαφόροι οἱ ἐν ταῖς πομπαῖς παραφέροντες αὐτοὺς [*scil.* ὀβελία ἄρτοι] ἐπὶ τῶν ὥμων. *PMG* 847 was probably recited/sung to the accompaniment of the aulos. On

to assume that the festival called *Megalartia* was somehow related to the better-known *Thesmophoria*.<sup>147</sup> Others have argued instead that the *Megalartia* represents an independent festival event, altogether unrelated to the *Thesmophoria*.<sup>148</sup> In any case, the festive feast and the performance of *PMG* 847 can be geographically located in Delos,<sup>149</sup> or at most, not far away in another island of the Cyclades.<sup>150</sup>

From a textual point of view, *PMG* 847 hinges on two terms, ἀχαίνην and τράγον, which, because of either the meaning or the form, represent *unica* in Greek literature.<sup>151</sup> The former term would confirm that *PMG* 847 was a ritual formula likely connected to the cult of Demeter. The latter indicates rather that the same text is likely to have been composed and performed not earlier than the Hellenistic age.

In *PMG* 847, by ἀχαίνην is meant a particular kind of bread (τούτου τοῦ ἄρτου).<sup>152</sup> When attested elsewhere, with morphological and prosodic variations, it refers to a species of

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the use of the *aulos* in processions, cf. Brand 2000: 126f. On the specific use of the *aulos* during Demetriad rituals, cf. Bellia 2012-2013: 332f.; Bellia 2015.

<sup>147</sup> The *Thesmophoria* was one of the most widespread festivals in ancient Greece: cf. Burkert 1985: 242-246; Sfameni-Gasparro 1986: 223-283; Prato 2000: 565-570 (cf. Prato 2001: xvii-xxx). Some scholars argue that the *Megalartia* and the *Thesmophoria* festivals belonged to the same ritual event and, more precisely, that the *Megalartia* represented a specific festival day taking place during the latter: Homolle 1882: 143; Nilsson 1906: 333 (but *contra* Nilsson 1955: 468 n. 6); Farnell 1907: 71; Wilamowitz 1921: 287 n. 4; Roussel 1987: 243 n. 8. Some translations of the passage go in the same direction: λέγων ταῖς θεσμοφόροις γίνεσθαι: cf. e.g. Yonge (1854: 181, 'he says that is made by women who celebrate the Thesmophoria'); Rodríguez-Noriega Guillén (1998: 104, 'afirmando que se hacen para las Tesmoforias'); Friedrich (1998: 189, 'indem er sagt, daß es zu den Thesmophorien gebacken wurde'); (Salvagno 2001: 289, 'dice che veniva prodotto per le donne che celebravano le feste Tesmoforie'). Lobeck (1829: 1063) has even amended the text: 'λέγων ἐν τοῖς θεσμοφορίοις γίνεσθαι'.

<sup>148</sup> Cf. Nilsson 1955: 468f.; Bruneau 1970: 289f.; Sfameni-Gasparro 1986: 228f.; Lanzillotta 1996: 314f.; Bertelli 2016 (comm. ad l.). The *Megalartia* festival is attested in Delphi, Boeotia and Thessaly. Cf. Kruse 1931: 140; Sontheimer 1931: 140; Salviat 1959: 385 n. 2; Sfameni-Gasparro 1986: 228f.; Magnani 2013: 45 n. 2.

<sup>149</sup> In Semus' *Delias*, Delos is explicitly mentioned only in (*FGrH* 396) FF 1, 4, 7, 9, 10, 12. Demetriad cults are attested in Delos since the third century BC. Cf. e.g. the mention of the temple θεσμοφόριον in *IG* 11<sup>2</sup>.145.76, 93 [302 BC], 287.11, 60-1, 68-9 [250 BC]. See also Sfameni-Gasparro 1986: 228 n. 15; Magnani 2013: 46 n. 6.

<sup>150</sup> In his *Delias*, Semus talks about traditions belonging to islands of the Cyclades other than Delos: (*FGrH* 396) FF 2, 3, 5, 13a-b, 17. Semus also mentions at least two examples drawn from elsewhere: one from the archipelago of the Sporades (F 6a-c) and one from Athens (F 21).

<sup>151</sup> Cf. also Magnani 2013: 45-50.

<sup>152</sup> A further reference to this kind of bread has been supposed in Hsch. χ 13 Cunn. †χαίνας†· στέαρ (cf. e.g. Neri 2003: 201; Magnani 2013: 48) and in Hegem. fr. 1.14 Brandt πεσσομένης ἀλόχου τὸν ἀχαῖκον [A :

deer.<sup>153</sup> Hence Pordomingo (1996: 476) has supposed that ἀχαιίνην was a bread ‘en forma de ciervo’.<sup>154</sup> Some evidence points to the existence of kinds of bread or cakes that were moulded in a peculiar shape (e.g. animals) for a specific ritual.<sup>155</sup> However, as regards ἀχαιίνην, there is no evident reason why a loaf shaped like a deer could be connected to the cult of Demeter.<sup>156</sup> A more plausible way to explain ἀχαιίνην consists in relating the term to the cult of Demeter *Achaea* (Ἀχαιία vel Ἀχαιά vel Ἀχαιία).<sup>157</sup> This cult, undoubtedly attested in Boeotia and in Athens,<sup>158</sup> may also be supposed to have existed on Delos.<sup>159</sup> It is not far-fetched to assume that some kind of loaf (ἀχαιίνην), ritually offered to Demeter, had been named after a specific

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ἀχάινον Casaubon : ἀχαικὸν Kaibel : Ἀχαιῖκὸν Tammaro] ἄρτον ἀεικῶς (cf. e.g. Magnani 2013: 49; Magnani 2014a: 379 n. 43). However, the meaning of both passages is very doubtful. Descriptions of peculiar local food occur elsewhere in Semus’ work: cf. e.g. ψαμμήτον (*FGrH* 396 F 2, *ap.* Harp. ε 14 Keaney) and βασυνία(ς) (F5, *ap.* Ath.14.645b; cf. also κόκκωρα), two kinds of cake attested only in those passages.

<sup>153</sup> Cf. Passow 1812: 81; Magnani 2013: 46 nn. 10-14; Zierlein 2013: 508; Kitchell 2014: 46.

<sup>154</sup> Cf. also Dalby 1995: 178 (‘a brocket full of suet’) and Lobeck 1829: 1064 (‘Ἀχαιίνης vel ἀχαιίνης [...] significat ἔλαφος’). According to Olson (2006: 18), ‘Aristotle [...] uses this adjective to describe a deer of some sort, and Semus (or Athenaeus) may have misunderstood its significance.’

<sup>155</sup> In particular, *PMG* 847 has been put in relation with Ath. 14.646e ἔλαφος· πλακοῦς ὁ τοῖς Ἐλαφηβολίοις ἀναπλασόμενος διὰ σταιτὸς καὶ μέλιτος καὶ σησάμου (cf. e.g. Lobeck 1829: 1064 and Kaibel 1887: 251 in their respective critical apparatuses). But in this case ἔλαφος represents a cake deliberately moulded as a deer on the occasion of the *Elaphebolia* (‘Festivals of the deer hunting’) dedicated to Artemis (cf. Citelli 2001: 1675 n. 7): the reference to the specific ritual context is clear.

<sup>156</sup> In general, pigs were the main animals to be immolated in honour of Demeter (and Persephone): cf. *ThesCRA* 1.79-82.

<sup>157</sup> See e.g. Nilsson 1906: 326, 333; Farnell 1907: 71f.; Suys 1994: 7f.

<sup>158</sup> See e.g. Hdt. 5.57, 61, Plut. *De Is. tt Os.* 378e. Cf. Sfameni-Gasparro 1986: 275-277; Suys 1994; Tammaro 2000: 661; Olson 2002: 254.

<sup>159</sup> See also Paus. 5.7.8 πρῶτος μὲν ἐν ὕμνῳ τῷ ἐς Ἀχαιίαν ἐποίησεν Ὡλὴν Λύκιος ἀφικέσθαι τὴν Ἀχαιίαν ἐς Δῆλον ἐκ τῶν Ὑπερβορέων τούτων· ἔπειτα δὲ ᾠδὴν Μελάνωπος Κυμαῖος ἐς Ὡπιν καὶ Ἐκαέρην ἦσεν, ὡς ἐκ τῶν Ὑπερβορέων καὶ αὗται πρότερον ἔτι τῆς Ἀχαιίας ἀφίκοντο καὶ ἐς Δῆλον. On this passage, cf. Maddoli 1995: 217-219; Magnani 2013: 48f., 58f.

cult epithet (*Achaea*) of the same goddess,<sup>160</sup> who, as we know, was often linked to baking and its products.<sup>161</sup>

A further problematic term quoted in the space of an iambic trimeter is τράγον. Three main interpretations have been put forward. First, the term τράγον has been understood in the sense of a ‘he-goat’ and in apposition to the term ἄχαιϊνν.<sup>162</sup> However, the sense of a dough-effigy of a goat, called ἄχαιϊνν and carried in procession during a ritual in honour of Demeter, would be puzzling.<sup>163</sup> Second, the term τράγον has been seen as a kind of bread, still depending in accusative on ἄχαιϊνν.<sup>164</sup> Indeed, τράγος (or τραγανός, lat. *tragum*) may also mean a species of wheat (‘emmer’), from which, however, not a kind of bread but a sort of porridge could be obtained.<sup>165</sup> Thirdly, τράγον can be interpreted as the second-person singular of the second-aorist imperative with a first-aorist ending (from τρώγω).<sup>166</sup> This is the most common interpretive approach among editors of *carmina popularia*,<sup>167</sup> and the most plausible for a series

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<sup>160</sup> In antiquity, the epithet *Achaea* was etymologically related to the goddess’ sorrow at the abduction of her daughter Persephone. On the etymology, see e.g. Magnani 2013: 49 n. 21; Suys 1994: 14-19. Farnell (1907: 71) and Sfameni-Gasparro (1986: 229) point out that ἄχαιϊνν in *PMG* 847 would evoke this element of sorrow in the Demetriad ritual. Cf. also the translations of the fragment by Gulick (1928: 17, ‘full of lard for our Lady of Sorrows’) and Sfameni-Gasparro (1986: 228, ‘pieno di grasso per l’Afflitta (*Achaia*)’).

<sup>161</sup> Cf. e.g. the epithets Σιτώ, Ἰμαλίδς, Μεγάλαρτος and Μεγαλόμαζος (Ath. 3.109b). See also *carm. pop. PMG* 849 (§3.1).

<sup>162</sup> Cf. the following translations: ‘a goat full of lard for our Lady of Sorrows’ (Gulick 1928: 17); ‘a goat, a brocket full of suet’ (Dalby 1995: 178); ‘acaine, capro ripieno di grasso’ (Lanzillotta 1996: 314); ‘einen Ziegenbock voll Fett als “*achainē*”’ (Friedrich 1998: 189; cf. Nothers 1998: 290, ‘Teig wurde oft in die Formen Tieren gefüllt und darin gebacken’); ‘un pan *achainēs* en forma de cabrito saturado de sebo’ (Rodríguez-Noriega Guillén 1998: 104); ‘un’*achaine* piena di lardo, dalla forma di capro’ (Salvagno 2001: 289); ‘an *achaina* he-goat full of lard’ (Olson 2006: 19).

<sup>163</sup> Likewise, it is unclear why the worshippers should be dedicating a deer-effigy (cf. *supra*).

<sup>164</sup> Cf. Palmerius 1668: 495; Bruneau 1970: 289 (‘achainè, gruauplein de graisse’); Sfameni-Gasparro 1986: 228 n. 13 (‘grano (o “polenta”) pieno di grasso per l’Afflitta (*Achaia*)’); Bertelli 2016: comm. ad l.

<sup>165</sup> See Dalby 1995: 201; Hill and Bryer 1995: 51f.; Dalby 2003: 47, 132, 331.

<sup>166</sup> Such an interpretation goes back to Schweighäuser (1802: 257, ‘vocem τράγον equidem pro aoristo secundo imperativi accepi, ex veteri dialecto pro communi τράγε, *comede*’). Cf. also Schweighäuser (1801: 426): ‘Achainam adipe plenam comede!’

<sup>167</sup> See e.g. Bergk 1882: 659 (in apparatus, cf. Bergk 1853: 1029; 1866: 1301); Edmonds 1940: 519 (‘munch the *achaine* full of lard’); Page 1962: 450 (in apparatus); Neri 2003: 201 (‘sbafa l’*achaine* ripiena di lardo’). Cf. also Meineke 1846: 5; Yonge 1854: 81 (‘eat a large achæinas, full of fat’); Meineke 1867: 50; Cerrato 1885: 218 (‘mangia l’*Achaina* pieno di adipe’); Wilamowitz 1921: 287 n. 4 (‘sprachlich interessant [*scil.* der Trimeter] wegen des Imperativs τράγον’); Pordomingo 1996: 473.



of reasons. It is, in fact, the only one that is able to guarantee the iambic trimeter semantic and syntactic sense as it survives. For instance, the ἀχαίνης (or ἀχαΐνη) loaf does not represent a staple food:<sup>168</sup> it is rather one of those delicacies typically consumed during festivals. In turn, the verb τρώγω (properly ‘to gnaw’, ‘nibble’, ‘munch’) is mostly employed for animals and in the case of humans eating vegetables, fruit or dessert as objects.<sup>169</sup> This verb, therefore, appears to be particularly suitable in the case of *PMG* 847. Furthermore, the use of an aorist formation would perfectly match the ritual and cultic context at stake. *PMG* 847 represents a prayer formula addressed to Demeter and by which the attendees at the festival prayed to the goddess to accept their food offering. As we know, imperatives in the aorist tense represent the most common form in ancient Greek prayers, ‘due to the fact that the speaker addresses to the god a request that usually regards a precise action and tends to visualize the action in a global way, since he is interested in the fulfilment of his desire’ (Eco Conti 2014: 119).<sup>170</sup>

Finally, the specific form τράγον is not attested elsewhere, but the use of first-aorist endings for the second-aorist imperative is familiar to the Greek language,<sup>171</sup> and more importantly, may tell us something important about the composition date of *PMG* 847. Such intrusions into the inflexion of the second-aorist, sometimes already attested in Homer and classical Attic Greek (cf. εἶπον-εἶπα, ἤνεγκον-ἤνεγκα), increasingly expanded in the Koine, and the entire process of substitution indeed was further completed in Modern Greek.<sup>172</sup> This general tendency is especially noticeable in non-literary papyri: cf. e.g. the aorist imperative προδιείλασθε (cf. εἶλον-εἶλάμην) in *P. Cairo Zen.* 59230.3 (253 BC), which represents ‘the first example which shows intrusion of the first aorist endings’ (Mandilaras 1973: 154). If we

<sup>168</sup> As instead in the case of ἄρτος (‘bread’ as a whole), cf. Dalby 2003: 59.

<sup>169</sup> Cf. e.g. Ath. 3.113c τὸν δὲ τοιοῦτον ἄρτον οἱ Σύροι λαχμὴν προσαγορεύουσι, καὶ ἐστὶν οὗτος ἐν Συρίᾳ χρηστότατος γινόμενος διὰ τὸ θερμότητος τρώγεσθαι. The *iunctura* ἄρτον τρώγειν frequently appears only beginning from the New Testament, in which the verb starts to replace ἐσθίω as the present to ἔφαγον (see Chadwick 1996: 287-290; Magnani 2013: 50 n. 27).

<sup>170</sup> Cf. also what has been said about the use of the present imperative in *PMG* 849 (§3.1, esp. n. 31).

<sup>171</sup> Cf. e.g. Hsch. α 239 L. ἄγαγον· ἀντὶ τοῦ ἄγαγε, <δόγγησον, φέρε> (cf. 238 L. ἀγάγας· ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀγαγών), Stob. 3.8.20 ἀπόθανε [ἀπόθανον A] μᾶλλον ἢ λίπης τὴν τάξιν, *Etym. Magn.* 793.8 Gaisf. εἶτα ἐπιβαλον μέλι, καὶ σιλίγνεως ἡμίναν (cf. Eust. *Od.* 1753.5 St.). An early ninth-century Byzantine grammarian, George Choïroboskos, ascribes this phenomenon to the Syracusan dialect, in order to explain the origin of the ending -ον in the second person singular of the sigmatic aorist imperative (*GG* IV/2 238.29-239.4, 240.10f., 32-36). Cf. Kühner-Blass, *AGGS* I/2 45. The information could derive from the ancient grammarian Ἰωάννης ὁ Χάραξ; cf. *GG* IV/2 242.25-243.8, *Etym. Magn.* 302.32-41 Gaisf.

<sup>172</sup> See Mandilaras 1973: 148-154; Gignac 1985: 49-54.

consider that second-aorist imperatives with first-aorist endings had started to appear with a high frequency only since the Hellenistic period, and that Semus, the first author to quote *PMG* 847, had lived in the second half of the third century BC, the form *τράγον* can be best understood as a contemporary linguistic feature, which was arguably also operative in the local Ionic dialect of the Cyclades (where *PMG* 847 was presumably performed, cf. *supra*).<sup>173</sup>

In conclusion, *PMG* 847 is a ritual formula by which Demeter is petitioned to accept a food offering.<sup>174</sup> It was part of a religious event held in or near Delos presumably in the Hellenistic period. Even though cultic servants were in charge of reciting this refrain while bearing the food offering (cf. *supra*), *PMG* 847 belonged to the whole community of devotees who would worship Demeter and take part in that event. On this view, *PMG* 847 can be considered a traditional (and anonymous) folk song. This is not to be confused with primitiveness: it rather describes the routine occasions in which *PMG* 847 was reperformed.

#### 4.3.2 A song for Persephone? (*PMG* 862)

EDD *Carm. pop.* 16 Neri = 862 Campbell = *PMG* 862 = 13 Edmonds = 51 Diehl = 10 Bergk<sup>4,3</sup>.

FONS Hippol. *Haer.* 5.8.40 ὁ δὲ στάχυς οὗτός ἐστι καὶ παρὰ Ἀθηναίοις ὁ παρὰ τοῦ ἀχαρακτηρίστου φωστήρ τέλειος μέγας, καθάπερ αὐτὸς ὁ ἱεροφάντης, οὐκ ἀποκεκομμένος μὲν ὡς ὁ Ἄττις, εὐνουχισμένος δὲ διὰ κωνείου καὶ πᾶσαν ἀπρητημένος τὴν σαρκικὴν γένεσιν, νυκτὸς ἐν <E>λευσῖνι ὑπὸ πολλῶ πυρὶ τελῶν τὰ μεγάλα καὶ ἄρρητα μυστήρια βοᾷ καὶ κέκραγε λέγων·

ἱερὸν ἔτεκε Πότνια Κούρον  
Βριμὼ Βριμόν,

τουτέστιν ἰσχυρὰ ἰσχυρόν.

Numeri: 3 tribachi et 3 spondei, cf. West, *GM* 148; Neri 1998a: 21.

|| Βριμόν Miller : -μή cod.

Cf. Hsch. β 1164 L. βριμός· μέγας. χαλεπός, 1166 L. Βριμὼ· ἰσχυρά.

A holy Son is born to our Lady

<sup>173</sup> The particular form *τράγον* could be a Hellenistic development that had infiltrated an earlier ritual phrase. This does not preclude that the new updated version as it appears in *PMG* 847 can be considered a Hellenistic composition.

<sup>174</sup> On the ritual ‘bakery’ and food offering as a whole, cf. Wilkins 2006: 105-109. Other examples of bread/cakes offered to deities can be found in Ath. 3.74d (ἡγητηρία), 110b (ἀπανθρακίς), 14.645a (ἀμφιφῶν), 645b (βασυνίας), 647a μύλλοι.

*Brimo*: he is *Brimos*.

*PMG* 862 has been included in the *carmina popularia* (except for Smyth's collection) since the editions of Bergk. In his brief comment *ad loc.*, Bergk implicitly accounts for this inclusion by pointing out that he has excluded from the collection other esoteric refrains because of their more recent origin.<sup>175</sup> In claiming this, Bergk believes that the label *carmen popolare* attached to *PMG* 862 depends on its relative primitiveness.<sup>176</sup> Modern scholarship, paying more attention to the content and the meaning of the text, has instead suggested that a post-classical composition can be assumed for *PMG* 862. This means that, if we want to consider *PMG* 862 as a folk song, we can no longer rely on its supposed and undefined primitiveness.

According to the third-century Christian writer Hippolytus (*Haer.* 5.8.40), *PMG* 862 represents the ritual cry the Hierophant would proclaim in a loud voice at the high point of the Eleusinian Mysteries.<sup>177</sup> The *opinio recepta* is that the title *Brimo* in *PMG* 862 refers to Demeter, whereas *Brimos* refers to her son Plutus, the god of wealth.<sup>178</sup> However, in antiquity the word *Brimo* was not only associated with Demeter, nor was it exclusively used in an Eleusinian context. The word *Brimo* first appears in a fourth-century BC Orphic Leaf from

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<sup>175</sup> See Bergk 1866: 1300; 1882: 658 ('Alias cantilenas in mysticis sacris frequentatas praetermisi, quoniam maximam partem satis sunt recentes'). The more recent ritual shouts excluded from the *carmina popularia* would be Firm. Mat. Err. prof. rel. 19.1 χαῖρε νόμφιε, χαῖρε νέον φῶς and 21.2 αἰαὶ δίκηρως δίμορφε. On these two ritual formulae, see Sanzi 2006: 138f. n. 152 and n. 162 respectively.

<sup>176</sup> Likewise, Adrados (2007: 75) has roughly included *PMG* 862 among the examples of pre-literary lyric.

<sup>177</sup> Cf. Scarpi 2002: 150-153, 524f. Hippolytus 'has taken his information from a Gnostic tract that in turn focuses on an older pagan commentary on a hymn to Attis' (Johnston 2013: 198 and n. 19). A word order similar to that of *PMG* 862 also occurs in Eur. Supp. 54 ἔτεκες καὶ σύ ποτ', ὃ πότνια, κοῦρον. Interestingly, the Chorus of the Argive Mothers addresses these words to Aethra, the mother of the Athenian king Theseus, before the altar of Demeter and Persephone in Eleusis. Cf. Richardson 1974: 26f.

<sup>178</sup> Cf. Hes. Theog. 969-974, Hom. Hymn Dem. 488-489. For this interpretation, see e.g. Richardson 1974: 317f.; Clinton 1992: 91-95; Parker 2005: 357-359; Bremmer 2013: 40f. and 2014:14f. According to Kerényi (1967: 92-94), the Eumolpidae, the Thracians forerunners of the priests of Eleusis, introduced in Athens two words, which served to translate the foreign names for the Mother and Son. These two words could designate Demeter, Kore or Hecate (cf. *infra*) in their capacity as goddesses of the underworld. For this reason, the refrain would reveal a message of faith for the devotees: a birth in death is possible! Slightly different is the interpretation of Sabbatucci (1991: 149f.). He claims that if *Brimo* is the esoteric name of Demeter, *Brimos* represents the initiated, i.e. the new individual that is born from the initiation (to whom Demeter *Brimo* gives birth at every initiation).

Pherae (GJ 27) along with other words used as ‘passwords’ (σύμβολα) for the Underworld. Later literary passages allude to a goddess named *Brimo* who was at home in the area around Lake Boebeis in the region of Pherae.<sup>179</sup> Lexicographic sources and scholia relate the story of the attempted rape of this goddess by Hermes and specifically refer the name *Brimo* to Persephone and Hecate.<sup>180</sup> This double identification occurs both in Ap. Rhod. 3.861f., 1211 and in Lycoph. *Alex.* 698, 1176, who together represent the earliest literary authors in which the name *Brimo* appears. In magical spells of later antiquity, the word is either part of a secret code in the same way as *Brimo* is in the aforementioned Orphic Leaf, or it is used as an epithet of goddesses related to the Underworld, but whose precise identity is not always evident.<sup>181</sup> Finally, in the *Argonautica Orphica* (17-20 and 428-431) the epithet identifies a primordial goddess, possibly Hecate.

On the basis of both these multiple contexts of use of the word *Brimo* – spanning from around 350-300 BC to late antiquity – and the etymological meaning of *Brimo/Brimos*,<sup>182</sup> Johnston (2013: 196-200) calls Hippolytus’ account into question. In her view, *PMG* 862 does not belong to a context relating to the Eleusinian Mysteries, because the meaning does not fit. By contrast, the Hierophant’s pronouncement would perfectly match the Lesser Mysteries, in which the leading figure Persephone, here referred to as *Brimo*, would give birth to her ‘strong’ son Dionysus, called *Brimos*.<sup>183</sup> More importantly, Johnston does not trace such a formula back

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<sup>179</sup> See Lycoph. *Alex.* 1180 and Prop. 2.2.11–12.

<sup>180</sup> See *Etym. Gen.* 261 s.v. Βριμώ, *Etym. Magn.* 213 Gaisf. s.v. Βριμώ, *Etym. Sym.* 1.502 s.v. Βριμώ, *schol.* Lycoph. *Alex.* 698 and 1176. Clemens of Alexandria (*Protr.* 2.15.1) shifts the story of the attempted rape from Hermes and Persephone/Hecate onto Zeus and Demeter (the latter referred to as *Brimo*).

<sup>181</sup> Cf. e.g. *PGM* 4.2270, 2607, 2960, 7. 692, 70.21.

<sup>182</sup> Hippolytus and Hesychius (cf. comparanda) understood the words to be synonyms for ‘strong’. According to Johnston (2013: 197f.), ‘*brim-*’ words also imply a connotation of overwhelming and terrifying strength, which does not fit the features of Demeter and Plutus.

<sup>183</sup> Cf. Johnston (2013: 198): ‘It is possible that Hippolytus confused information about the Eleusinian Mysteries with information about the Lesser Mysteries, which were performed in the Athenian suburb of Agrai about seven months before the Eleusinian Mysteries and which were linked with the Eleusinian Mysteries in ancient perception and practice.’ Similarly, Mylonas (1962: 305-310) had already put forward that Hippolytus’ formula should belong not to the Eleusinian Mysteries, but to the Mysteries of Rhea-Cybele in Asia Minor. In this case, therefore, Rhea-Cybele would be referred to as *Brimo*, whereas the title *Brimos* would belong to the Kouros Attis, worshipped as the reborn nature.

to the earliest stages of the Lesser Mysteries, but to a post-classical development, when Persephone is more likely to have been identified with *Brimo*.<sup>184</sup>

If we accept Johnson's view, it is clear that *PMG* 862 can no longer be considered a primitive or pre-literary refrain as was assumed by Bergk and by the romantically-inclined notion of folksong he had applied to the text. Nevertheless, if one looks at its contexts of use and consumption, *PMG* 862 can still be seen as a folk song. This refrain represents a traditional ritual formula, which was essentially used and perceived in function of a specific religious ceremony, and which was therefore performed at recurrent events. This traditional nature of the text does not necessarily point to an undefined and remote past but marks the symbolic and cultural value of the routine performances of *PMG* 862.

### 4.3.3 A dance-song in honour of Aphrodite (*PMG* 864)

EDD *Carm. pop.* 18 Neri = 864 Campbell = *PMG* 864 = 23 Edmonds = 22 Diehl = 12 Smyth = 17 Bergk<sup>4,3</sup> = 11 Bergk<sup>2</sup> = 6 Bergk<sup>1</sup> = 25 Schneidewin.

FONS Lucian *Salt.* 10-11 Ἰδοὺς δ' ἄν νῦν ἔτι καὶ τοὺς ἐφήβους αὐτῶν (*scil.* Λακεδαιμονίων) οὐ μείον ὀρχεῖσθαι ἢ ὀπλομαχεῖν μανθάνοντας· ὅταν γὰρ ἀκροχειρισάμενοι καὶ παίσαντες καὶ παισθέντες ἐν τῷ μέρει παύσωνται, εἰς ὄρχησιν αὐτοῖς ἡ ἀγωνία τελευτᾷ, καὶ αὐλητῆς μὲν ἐν τῷ μέσῳ κάθηται ἐπαυλῶν καὶ κτυπῶν τῷ ποδί, οἱ δὲ κατὰ στοῖχον ἀλλήλοις ἐπόμενοι σχήματα παντοῖα ἐπιδείκνυνται πρὸς ῥυθμὸν ἐμβαίνοντες, ἄρτι μὲν καὶ Ἀφροδίτη φίλα. τοιγαροῦν καὶ τὸ ῥῆγμα ὃ μεταξὺ ὀρχοῦμενοι ᾄδουσιν Ἀφροδίτης ἐπὶ κλησὶς ἐστὶν καὶ Ἑρώτων, ὥς συγκωμάζοιεν αὐτοῖς καὶ συνορχοῖντο· καὶ θάτερον δὲ τῶν ᾠσμάτων, δύο γὰρ ἄδεται, διδασκαλίαν ἔχει ὥς χρηρὴ ὀρχεῖσθαι· 'πόρρω γάρ', φησὶν (φασὶν codd.), 'ὦ παῖδες κτλ.', τουτέστιν ἄμεινον ὀρχήσασθε.

πόρρω γάρ, ὦ παῖδες, πόδα μετάβατε καὶ κωμάζατε βέλτιον.

Numeri: iambics or trochaics. See Smyth 1900: 503; Wilamowitz 1921: 287 n. 4; Lambin 1992: 432 n. 41.

Codd: ΓΩΦΕ.

|| γάρ et ὦ om. Schneidewin, Bergk<sup>1</sup> (fort. Luciani) : πόρρω παῖδες μετάβατε πόδας κτλ. dub. Page | κωμάζατε Γ<sup>sscf</sup>. ΩΦ: κωμάσατε ΓΕ.

Cf. Hsch. κ 4826 L. κωμάδδεν· ὀρχεῖσθαι.

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<sup>184</sup> Cf. Johnston (2013: 198): 'Such a pronouncement need not necessarily go back to the earliest stages of the Lesser Mysteries; if I am right that Brimo entered broader Greek awareness relatively late, the pronouncement (at least in the language that Hippolytus transmits it) would have been added after the name became associated with Persephone. And indeed, any attention paid at the Lesser Mysteries to Persephone and Dionysus as a mother-child pair would by definition post-date the development of the rituals and myths that we have examined in this book, which we suggest arose during the late archaic or early classical period.'

For you must put your foot well forward, lads, and hold your revels better.

*PMG* 864 is presented by Lucian (*Salt.* 10-11) as the refrain of a Spartan song, presumably in honour of Aphrodite (and/or Dionysus), which was performed as part of an education programme directed to the epebes.<sup>185</sup> My analysis aims to show that this text, though embedded in what seems to be an institutionalised formal context, can still be considered a folk song, if one takes into due account its modalities of use and perception. To this effect, I shall compare another ‘educational’ text (*Ar. Nub.* 967) that can be interpreted from the same perspective.

In the introductory sections to his treatise *On Dance* (10-11), Lucian praises the musical and dance inclinations of the Spartans.<sup>186</sup> In so doing, he refers to two specific songs performed by Spartan epebes. The first is an invocation to Aphrodite and the Loves, who are invited to join the dance of the epebes.<sup>187</sup> From the second, which might be similar to the first, a refrain is quoted (*PMG* 864), which also represents a precise instruction on how to execute a dance step:

Even now you may see their young men studying dancing quite as much as fighting under arms. When they have stopped sparring and exchanging blow for blow with each other, their contest ends in dancing, and a flute-player sits in the middle, playing them a tune and marking time with his foot, while they, following one another in line, perform figures of all sorts in rhythmic step, now those of war and presently those of the choral dance, that are dear to Dionysus and Aphrodite. That is why the song which they sing while dancing is an invocation of Aphrodite and of the Loves, that they may join their revel and their dances. The second of the songs, moreover, for two are sung, even

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<sup>185</sup> It is unclear whether the particle γάρ belongs to the original refrain or to Lucian’s paraphrasis. Cf. also Page (1962: 458): ‘incertum quatenus paraphrasis vel quo modo cantilena sit restituenda.’

<sup>186</sup> Lucian’s treatise is structured as a dialogue between the Cynic Crato, a fierce detractor of the pantomime genre, and Lycinus, who tries to convince him otherwise (cf. e.g. Lada-Richards 2007: 79-97). Speaking through Lycinus, Lucian devotes the first part of his work (sections 1-22) to a general overview on the importance of music and dance in human history.

<sup>187</sup> Cf. also *carm. pop.* *PMG* 871 (§4.1.2).

contains instruction how to dance: ‘For you must put your foot well forward, lads,’ it says, ‘and hold your revels better’.<sup>188</sup>

According to Lucian’s account, *PMG* 864 was part of the elite education in ancient Sparta.<sup>189</sup> Still in the second century AD,<sup>190</sup> the Spartan ephebes, after a military training session (ὀπλομαχεῖν),<sup>191</sup> would devote themselves to the study and practice of choral dance (ὀρχεῖσθαι [...] μανθάνοντας). The question thus arises whether *PMG* 864 may still be considered a folk song, even though it was performed in such an institutionalised educative context. In modern scholarship, there is the lack of adequate discussion concerning the folkloric status of this text. The only useful analysis for our purposes goes back to the pioneering article by Köster (1831: 45): his treatment, albeit very brief, raises some doubts as to the ‘folkloric’ nature of *PMG* 864.<sup>192</sup> Köster argues that ordinary people in ancient Greece sang similar songs, possessing a similar level of sophistication (‘extreme simplicity’) to that expressed in *PMG* 864. Nevertheless, he does not consider this specific refrain genuinely ‘folk’, since it is likely to have been part, just as other songs mentioned in Lucian, of more sophisticated (and so ‘literary’) pieces of works.<sup>193</sup> Köster here applies a Romantic conceptualisation – common to his times but in some cases still adopted today – which is based on pre-conceived contexts of origin and composition and which therefore sees folk songs as lowbrow forms of poetry. In his assessment, Köster was possibly influenced by the performative contexts described by Lucian, in which *PMG* 864 appears to be sung within a milieu of elite education. For this reason, *PMG* 864 seems to represent something more than a simple, unsophisticated folksong.

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<sup>188</sup> Transl. Harmon 1962: 225, 227 (adapted). For the Greek text, cf. FONS. *PMG* 864 has been considered an example of hyporchema dance (see Prudhommeau 1965: 315; Lambin 1992: 189f.). According to Prudhommeau (1965: 268), the dance step described is the *coupé*.

<sup>189</sup> By ‘elite education’, I mean here the liberal arts that free children from elite families were taught. Cf. e.g. Wrenhaven (2015: 464): ‘In contrast to “elite” education, “popular” education was vocational and involved “the transmission of skills in farming or other trades”.’

<sup>190</sup> The song is presented as contemporary with Lucian’s/Lycinus’ times (ἴδοις δ’ ἂν νῦν ἔτι κτλ.).

<sup>191</sup> Military education was never out-of-place in Sparta, albeit in the peaceful setting of imperial times. See e.g. Kennell 1995; Powell 2015: 107-110.

<sup>192</sup> *PMG* 864 is also discussed by Adrados (2007: 70) but only in terms of modes of performance: the refrain would have sung by a sort of χοροδιδάσκαλος.

<sup>193</sup> Köster (1831: 45): ‘Eximia eius simplicitate eo adducimur, ut, etsi non hoc ispum carmen, tamen persimilia a populo cantata esse statuamus: [*PMG* 864]. Alterius generis carminum argumenta permulta apud Lucianum leguntur, sed omnia fere ad deorum sacra pertinuisse, et artificiose videntur composita esse.’

In my opinion, the focus ought to lie not on what kind of song (established by criteria of sophistication) is sung and by whom (the Spartan ephebes), but rather on how *PMG* 864 was perceived in its own contexts of use and consumption. From these perspectives, *PMG* 864 can still be considered a folk song. This refrain was not used and studied in the same way a student nowadays can learn and appreciate a piece of poetry at school or university. When we study a poem or a text in an institutionalised educative context, we tend to analyse it from a literary perspective: attention is mostly confined to its aspects of origin and composition (e.g. its content and form, the biographical account of its author, its historical and cultural background, and so on). As for *PMG* 864, the mode of reception was radically different. The Spartan ephebes would perform this text to practise their musical and dancing abilities. In other words, *PMG* 864 was performed mainly in function of a specific practical training. This also means that *PMG* 864 was essentially used and perceived from a functional-occasional perspective, which, as already seen, in most cases identifies a text as a folk song. In turn, the Spartan ephebes can be seen as a folk group, i.e. as a community of people who share the same cultural references (cf. §1.3.1). As an educational song, *PMG* 864 was thus appropriated and shared by the specific folk group of the Spartan youth.

Let us turn to another example of educational song, this time from classical Athens. In Aristophanes' *Clouds* (961-967), the Superior Argument (Κρείττων Λόγος) describes the old good times of education (τὴν ἀρχαίαν παιδείαν), when children went to the music master (εἰς κιθαριστοῦ) who would teach them to memorise songs such as 'Pallas, Dire City Sacker' (Παλλάδα περσέπολιν δεινάν) and 'A Cry Sounds From Afar' (τηλέπορόν τι βόαμα).<sup>194</sup> Through these incipits and/or refrains, Aristophanes refers to two songs – the first being a clear hymn to Pallas Athena – without mentioning any authorship at all. Why? Was the authorship of the two songs well known to everyone, so that it was superfluous to mention it? Or, more simply, was it completely unknown to the playwright and his public? Interestingly, later scholarly sources suggested a series of potential authors' names.<sup>195</sup> With specific regard to the

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<sup>194</sup> Ar. *Nub.* 961-967 λέξω τοίνυν τὴν ἀρχαίαν παιδείαν ὡς διέκειτο, / ὅτ' ἐγὼ τὰ δίκαια λέγων ἦνθουν καὶ σωφροσύνη 'νενόμιστο. / πρῶτον μὲν ἔδει παιδὸς φωνὴν γρύξαντος μηδὲν' ἀκοῦσαι. / εἶτα βαδίζειν ἐν ταῖσιν ὁδοῖς εὐτάκτως εἰς κιθαριστοῦ / τοὺς κωμήτας γυμνοὺς ἀθρόους, καὶ κριμνώδη καταναίφοι. / εἶτ' αὖ προμαθεῖν ᾄσμι' ἐδίδασκεν τὸ μὴρὸ μὴ ξυνέχοντας, / ἢ 'Παλλάδα περσέπολιν δεινάν' ἢ 'τηλέπορόν τι βόαμα'. The Superior Argument generically speaks of the past, but it cannot be excluded that the songs in question were still performed in Aristophanes' times, even though roughly perceived as belonging to an old tradition.

<sup>195</sup> As far as the second song is concerned (τηλέπορόν τι βόαμα), the ancient sources refer to a certain Kydidas of Hermione. See Dover 1968: 215.



hymn to Pallas, Hellenistic scholarship testifies to a heated debate over its authorship: the song and its refrain were variously attributed to Lamprocles (*PMG* 735), Stesichorus (fr. 322a-b Finglass) or even Phrynichus (fr. 78 KA).<sup>196</sup> This intense debate in Alexandrian scholarship, on the one hand, and the omission of any author's name in the Aristophanes passage, on the other, reflect two different modalities of perception of the hymn to Pallas across multiple contexts of use and reception. By means of a well-defined and historical authorial attribution, Hellenistic scholars aimed to legitimise and authorise a textualised song as a proper literary text. Instead, Aristophanes reveals the kind of perception that the hymn to Athena is likely to have enjoyed in its performative context, or at least, in one of its performative contexts. In a similar way to *PMG* 864, performed by the Spartan ephebes in function of their dance-training programme, the hymn to Pallas Athena – along with the other song mentioned by Aristophanes – was used and perceived by the pupils of Athens mainly from a functional-occasional perspective, as an educational song that would have enabled them to develop their musical skills. Therefore, within the Athenian education system, the hymn to Athena was not performed (and so perceived) as a song of Stesichorus, Lamprocles or whomever else, but as an anonymous (invalid 'author-function') folk song that belonged to the community of its performers/users: i.e. the pupils of Athens. For this very reason, the author's name of the hymn was presumably forgotten throughout the ages, but then reaffirmed and discussed in the literary discourse of the Hellenistic period.

A point of clarification is needed at this juncture. Are all songs that are linked to a school context potentially folk? The point is not to essentialise folk song as an unchanging cultural artefact, but to examine how a cultural artefact can become folk by virtue of its use. All kinds of songs – including educational songs – can potentially be used and perceived from the folkloric perspectives I have described. What really makes the difference are the specific contexts of use and the related modalities of reception. In antiquity, the primary role of music in (elite) education is commonly known. Ancient Greek children and youth performed songs as part of their educational training. But the contexts of these performances could vary a great deal, and accordingly the songs performed could be perceived in multiple ways. For example, Alcman's *Partheneion* 1 – whose educational role in Sparta has been largely discussed<sup>197</sup> – is likely to have been performed mainly from a self-standing perspective, representing a pure form

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<sup>196</sup> See Chamaeleon fr. 29a Wehrli, Eratosthenes fr. 101 Strecker, *POxy.* 1611 fr. 5 + 43, *schol.* Ar. *Nub.* 967a-b. Cf. Dover 1968: 215; Pòrtulas 2012: 231-233; Davies–Finglass 2014: 595f.

<sup>197</sup> Cf. e.g. Calame 2001.

of spectacle albeit within a ritual occasion (cf. §1.3.2). On the other hand, the Spartan triple refrain (*carm. pop. PMG* 870), which includes a chorus of children, also played a significant role in the education system of the polis, but at the same time, it represents a song which was used and perceived mainly from a functional-occasional perspective (cf. §4.2.3). On the basis of these different modes of use and perception in their respective performative contexts, *PMG* 870 is interpretable as a folk song, whereas Alcman's *Partheneion* 1 is not.

In conclusion, one needs to bear in mind that *paideia* is quite a broad conceptual field that goes well beyond institutionalised education.<sup>198</sup> For instance, children's game songs such as *carm. pop. PMG* 861, 875, 876,<sup>199</sup> or more specifically, the begging song sung by the Rhodian children to celebrate the arrival of spring/swallow (*carm. pop. PMG* 848, §2.1), were not performed within an institutionalised educative programme. These texts, however, were undoubtedly part of the culture of children in antiquity. *PMG* 848 and 864 were therefore performed in two different contexts – the former less formal and institutionalised than the latter – with two different functions, but each of them represents a song that was used and perceived from a functional-occasional perspective. In this sense, they are both interpretable as folk songs.

#### 4.3.4 The song of the Bottiaean maidens (*PMG* 868)

EDD *Carm. pop.* 22 Neri = 868 Campbell = *PMG* 868 = 36 Edmonds = 53 Diehl = 18 Smyth = 23 Bergk<sup>4,3</sup> = 18 Bergk<sup>2</sup> = 11 Bergk<sup>1</sup> = 28 Schneidewin.

FONT (I) Plut. *Thes.* 16.2-3 Ἀριστοτέλης (fr. 490.1 G.) δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν τῇ Βοττιαίων πολιτείᾳ δῆλός ἐστιν οὐ νομίζων ἀναιρεῖσθαι τοὺς παῖδας ὑπὸ τοῦ Μίνω, ἀλλὰ θητεύοντας ἐν τῇ Κρήτῃ καταγυράσκειν· καὶ ποτε Κρήτας εὐχρὴν παλαιὰν ἀποδιδόντας ἀνθρώπων ἀπαρχὴν εἰς Δελφοὺς ἀποστέλλειν, τοῖς δὲ πεμπομένοις ἀναμειχθέντας ἐκγόνους ἐκείνων συνεξελεῖν· ὥς δ' οὐκ ἦσαν ἱκανοὶ τρέφειν αὐτοὺς αὐτόθι, πρῶτον μὲν εἰς Ἰταλίαν διαπερᾶσαι κάκει κατοικεῖν περὶ τὴν Ἰαπυγίαν, ἐκεῖθεν δ' αὖθις εἰς Θράκην κομισθῆναι καὶ κληθῆναι Βοττιαίους· διὸ τὰς κόρας τῶν Βοττιαίων θυσίαν τινὰ τελούσας ἐπάδειν·

ἴωμεν εἰς Ἀθήνας.

|| (II) Plut. *Quaest. Graec.* 35.298f-299a Τί δήποτε ταῖς κόραις τῶν Βοττιαίων ἔθος ἦν λέγειν χορευούσαις ἴωμεν εἰς Ἀθήνας; Κρήτάς φασιν εὐξαμένους ἀνθρώπων ἀπαρχὴν εἰς Δελφοὺς ἀποστέλλαι, τοὺς δὲ πεμφθέντας, ὥς ἐώρων οὐδεμίαν οὔσαν εὐπορίαν, αὐτόθεν εἰς ἀποικίαν ὀρμῆσαι· καὶ πρῶτον μὲν ἐν Ἰαπυγίᾳ κατοικῆσαι, ἔπειτα τῆς Θράκης τοῦτον τὸν τόπον κατασχεῖν, ἀναμειγμένων αὐτοῖς Ἀθηναίων. ἔοικε γὰρ μὴ διαφθεῖρειν ὁ Μίνως οὓς ἔπεμπον Ἀθηναῖοι κατὰ τὸν δασμὸν ἡθέους, ἀλλὰ κατέχειν παρ' αὐτῷ λατρεύοντας. ἐξ ἐκείνων οὖν τινες

<sup>198</sup> On the non-institutionalised culture of schoolchildren in modern Britain, cf. the standard work of Iona and Peter Opie (1959).

<sup>199</sup> See Neri 1998a; Neri 2003: 220f., 236-243; Neri 2003a: 243-253, 277-300, 523f.; Karanika 2012.

γεγονότες καὶ νομιζόμενοι Κρήτες εἰς Δελφοὺς συναπεστάλησαν. ὅθεν αἱ θυγατέρες τῶν Βοττιαίων ἀπομνημονεύουσαι τοῦ γένους ἦδον ἐν ταῖς ἐορταῖς ἴωμεν εἰς Ἀθήνας’.

Numeri: 2ia^.

|| Ἀθήνας Page, rec. Campbell.

Let us go to Athens.

*PMG* 868 has been included in the collection of the *carmina popularia*, but its folkloric status has never been adequately discussed.<sup>200</sup> However, as already amply discussed (cf. e.g. §4.1), the common conceptualisation of folksong has led many scholars to consider the texts included in such a collection on the basis of their preconceived contexts of origin and composition, that is to say, as vaguely primitive, lowbrow forms of poetry. In what follows, I shall show how the mythological implications the ancient sources assume for *PMG* 868 do not necessarily suggest a primitive origin of the text. By also comparing another ritual refrain described in Plutarch (*Quaest. Graec.* 26.297b), in this case with a clear and defined authorial origin (Hom. *Od.* 18.148, 19.298), I shall demonstrate that, if we want to apply the notion of folksong to *PMG* 868, we need to break away from the above preconceptions and examine the text on the basis of its contexts of use and consumption.

*PMG* 868 – quoted by Plutarch twice (*Thes.* 16.2-3 and *Quaest. Graec.* 35.298f-299a) via the Aristotelian *Constitution of the Bottiaeans* (fr. 490.1 G.)<sup>201</sup> – is the ritual refrain the Bottiaean maidens used to sing while dancing and/or making sacrifices during festive occasions. According to the Peripatetic interpretation (transmitted and endorsed by Plutarch), the refrain ‘Let us go to Athens’ would recall the supposed Athenian origin of the Bottiaeans. The story goes that Minos would not have sacrificed the human offerings sent by the Athenians to feed the Minotaur. Instead, he would have kept the Athenian ephebes in Crete as servants. When some of the Cretans had later been sent to Delphi as tribute in accordance with a vow, they mingled with descendants of the Athenian prisoners. After leaving Delphi for lack of

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<sup>200</sup> See e.g. Köster 1831: 48; Halliday 1928: 149-152; Pordomingo 1991: 219; Lambin 1992: 348f.

<sup>201</sup> The Aristotelian source is explicitly quoted only in the *Life of Theseus*, where *PMG* 868 is employed to support the rationalistic interpretation of the Cretan reign of Minos (cf. *infra*). Conversely, in the *Greek Questions*, the focus of the discourse is shifted onto the meaning of the text itself: the rationalistic account of the mythical Crete serves as an aetiological explanation of the refrain.

resources, they initially settled in Iapygia and then finally moved to Thrace, founding Bottiaea.<sup>202</sup>

This mythical account raises some questions about the origin of the text itself. In what period did *PMG* 868 originate? How long after the Bottiaeans had settled in Thrace did their virgins start to sing that refrain? In other words, was *PMG* 868 that old or does it represent rather a more recent composition that was later related to the mythical peregrinations of the Cretans? In this regard, two possibilities may be examined, both of which strike me as equally valid. Either *PMG* 868 was manipulated by the sources themselves, or the Bottiaeans reused the text with a different meaning from its original one.<sup>203</sup> The following considerations will clarify that the interpretation of *PMG* 868 as a folk song cannot be based on its supposed contexts of origin and composition, which are impossible to define with absolute certainty.

In the former case, it is to be assumed that the meaning of *PMG* 868 was to some extent manipulated and readapted, presumably by the Peripatetic tradition itself. For instance, Otto Crusius has maintained that *PMG* 868 does not refer to the mythical wanderings of the Cretans, but to the armed conflicts between Athens and the Chalcidians-Bottiaeans during the Peloponnesian War.<sup>204</sup> More generally, Halliday (1928: 152) argues that the explanation of *PMG* 868 provided by the sources results from the Athenian manipulation of myth due to the political interests at stake in fifth-century BC Chalcidice. In Halliday's view, the mention of Athens might simply refer to its status of a renowned city, rather than to the mythical origins

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<sup>202</sup> As a matter of fact, the Bottiaeans had lived in Bottice, the western interior of the Chalcidian peninsula, north of the three prongs, Pallene, Sithonia, and Acte. Nevertheless, 'it seems that from a 5th century point of view Chalkidike was considered as belonging to Thrace' (see Flensted-Jensen 1995: 105). For this reason, the ancient sources speak of Thrace as the historical land of the Bottiaeans. Many mythological accounts attest to the Cretan origins of the Bottiaeans and their colonising settlements of Southern Italy (Iapygia and Sicily). Other historical sources, however, postulate that the Bottiaeans emigrated from Bottiaea, the part of Macedonia in which Pella was situated. On these supposed origins and migrations of the Bottiaeans, see Halliday 1928: 150f.; Bérard 1957: 417-433; Flensted-Jensen 1995; Carrano 2007: 143-146 nn. 136 and 137.

<sup>203</sup> Another possibility is that the Bottiaeans themselves invented this mythical 'tradition' entirely, along with the related refrain (*PMG* 868), at a much later time.

<sup>204</sup> *Ap. Diehl* (1925: 208): 'versiculus [*scil. PMG* 868], quam ad mythum rettulit Plutarchus, vereor ne ad bella a Bottiaeis contra Athenienses gesta (a. 429) referendus sit.' Crusius is probably alluding to the battle outside Spatulas – the main polis of the Bottiaeans – where the Chalcidians and the Bottiaeans defeated the Athenians in 429 BC (cf. Flensted-Jensen 1995: 119-122).

of the Bottiaeans. In this sense, the composition of the refrain should not be much earlier than the classical age, when Athens had actually started to get its status of a renowned city.<sup>205</sup>

The second, equally valid scenario imagines that the meaning of *PMG* 868 was actually the same as that described by the sources (the Bottiaean maidens claiming an ancestral Athenian descent), but that the text represents the version of a verse readapted in the meaning (and possibly even in the form) by the performers themselves. Plutarch's *Greek Questions* provide a striking example in this regard. In section 26 (297b-c), the meaning of the ritual refrain μήποτε νοστήσατε φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν ('May you never return home to your dear fatherland') is discussed. The maidens of the Ainianians<sup>206</sup> used to sing such a refrain while escorting the procession of the ox from Ainis to Cassiopeia. According to the explanation offered by Plutarch,<sup>207</sup> the Ainianians, through their ritual, would beg the gods not to return to their ancient homeland, the plain of Kirra, which had once proved to be a hostile place to live in. Although the reliability of his interpretation cannot be confirmed,<sup>208</sup> Plutarch describes another ritual refrain whose meaning may be related to the mythological wanderings of a specific ancient population. What Plutarch omits to say is that the refrain of the Ainianians clearly represents an adaptation from Hom. *Od.* 18.148 ὁπότε νοστήσειε φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν and 19.298 ὅπως νοστήσειε φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν.<sup>209</sup> Nothing prevents us from assuming a similar

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<sup>205</sup> Halliday (1928: 152): 'It is clearly an example of Athenian manipulation of legend for political purposes, the motive of which here lay in the interest of imperial Athens in τὰ ἐπὶ Θράκης. [...]. "Let us go to Athens" was doubtless the genuine refrain of a Bottiaean singing game. But such songs are not necessarily of the very ancient origin, which modern antiquaries, no less than ancient, are fond of assigning them. The song can hardly antedate the reign of Peisistratos, and more probably may be thought to belong to the fifth century B.C. It implies that Athens is a place of renown, but it has no further necessary racial or political significance. "Lend me a pin to stick in my thumb / To carry the lady to London town" is sung in Fifeshire, but the singers do not claim Cockney descent.'

<sup>206</sup> The Ainianians are a North East people, cf. also *Quaest. Graec.* 35.293f-294c.

<sup>207</sup> According to Halliday (1928: 130), the source of Plutarch would be Aristotle's *Constitution of the Malians*.

<sup>208</sup> According to Halliday (1928: 129f.) and Lambin (1992: 349f.), the explanation provided by Plutarch remains unconvincing.

<sup>209</sup> When did the Ainianians start to perform the Homeric line in the new ritual role? According to Lambin (1992: 350), the refrain of the Ainianians 'ne doit pas être antérieure à l'époque où les œuvres du poète [*scil.* Homère] furent connues de tous jusque dans les parties les plus reculées du monde grec: disons qu'elle n'est pas antérieure au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle, comme la précédente [*scil.* *PMG* 868]'. Lambin is possibly alluding to the Pisistratean edition of the Homeric poems. Cf. also Halliday (1928: 130): 'The chant of the maiden is adapted from *Odyssey* [...] and incidentally illustrates the all-pervading influence of the Homeric poems.'

reworking for *PMG* 868: the refrain of the Bottiaean, too, might have been taken out from its original context and adapted for different (ritual) purposes.

The above analysis has shown the difficulty of ascertaining the original context of production and the original meaning of *PMG* 868. All the options explored appear potentially viable. What is important to keep in mind is that the mythological implications expressed by the Aristotelian source do not necessarily point to a vaguely remote (pre-archaic) origin of *PMG* 868. Secondly, it cannot be excluded that the text and its meaning, as described in the ancient sources, may result from later re-elaborations of the same verse. In light of these considerations, it is now clear how inconvenient it may be to discuss the label of *carmen popolare* attached to *PMG* 868 on the basis of pre-established contexts of origin and composition. Instead, one can more effectively resort to a conceptualisation based on contexts of use. Regardless of its original contexts of composition and its original meanings, *PMG* 868 can be considered a folk song in the sense of a ritual refrain sung mainly from a functional-occasional standpoint. In this sense, *PMG* 868 is also an anonymous and traditional folksong. This is because, on the one hand, the name of its author was irrelevant for the purposes of the performance (invalid ‘author-function’), while on the other hand, because *PMG* 868 was performed in synchronic reperformances, that is to say, as part of recurrent, traditional events.

A fruitful parallel has been pinpointed in the ritual refrain of Ainianians, which in turn represents a re-adaption of a Homeric verse (cf. *supra*). Even this refrain, if analysed in the specific contexts of use and consumption constituted by the ritual procession held in Ainis, can be considered from folkloric perspectives. The Ainianians celebrating their rituals were not interested in the Homeric authorship of the refrain, which was instead used and perceived from a functional-occasional perspective. This anonymous perception is confirmed by Plutarch, who in describing the ritual and quoting the refrain, makes no reference to Homer at all. On this view, even a Homeric verse can be considered an anonymous and traditional folksong. Regardless of their own contexts of origin and production, but on the basis of specific modalities of reception, both the refrain of the Bottiaeans (*PMG* 868) and the refrain of the Ainianians (a Homeric verse) can be seen as part of ancient Greek folklore.

## Conclusion

When talking about popular culture and folklore, we always run the risk of taking for granted the nature of the cultural objects analysed. The reason for this lies in the fact that their nature and perception are deeply influenced by the variety of cultural and social attitudes which predominate in different epochs over a long period of time. Therefore, labels such as ‘popular’ or ‘folk’ need constantly to be historicised and contextualised: what is popular or the object of mass consumption in one era may well be regarded as elitist and esoteric in another. This is *a fortiori* true when using the same concepts to discuss the ancient world. The present dissertation has investigated the ancient Greek folksong tradition by seeking to build upon a new and more systematic conceptualisation, which partly rejects and partly redirects the cornerstones of Romantic influence that still pervades even some of the most recent scholarship.

In the introductory chapter, I first provided an overview of the conceptual and cultural origins of folklore and folksong (§1.1). In particular, I noticed the inadequacies of a romantically-oriented view that tends to consider the category of folksong according to pre-conceived contexts of origin and production and criteria of sophistication. This critical view fails to explain what a folk song is but merely identifies a series of texts from principles which set out to define what they are not, through the use of binary oppositions that categorically distinguish folk poetry from literature: i.e. ‘oral’ vs. ‘written’, ‘simple’ vs. ‘complex’, ‘anonymous’ vs. ‘authorial’, ‘traditional’ vs. ‘modern’. The same approach underpins the formation and interpretation of the modern collections of ancient Greek folk songs, usually labelled as *carmina popularia* (§1.2). The result is a subset of texts that are vaguely and misleadingly defined as anonymous and/or pre-(non-)literary forms of poetry, and that as a result fail to match the (higher) formal standards of the canonical literature of ancient Greece.

To rectify this scholarly bias, I provided a new conceptualisation which clarifies that ‘folksong’ is not a category of form but is a category determined by occasion, use and consumption (§1.3). Aspects such as functionality, traditionality and anonymity have not been dismissed altogether, but rather have been reconsidered from different angles. The starting point has been to identify two types of perspectives from which songs are generally perceived in their contexts of use: first, an occasional-functional perspective, and, second, a stand-alone perspective (§1.3.2).<sup>1</sup> These two perspectives present differences in degree rather than an

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<sup>1</sup> Here I have applied and extended the approach adopted by Budelmann (2013) to discuss ritual songs in ancient Greece.

absolute separation. When the functional use is prevalent, the focus is not on the aesthetics of songs and their performances, but on what they represent for their own performers/consumers (i.e. the various folk groups). Songs that are used and perceived mainly from an occasional-functional standpoint tend to be constantly reperformed in a recurring event (synchronic reperformances). On this view, they can be considered ‘traditional’ by being part of a habitual routine, and not in the sense as simply ‘old-fashioned’ or ‘primitive’ (§1.3.3). Moreover, the same kinds of songs are used and perceived anonymously, in the sense that the authorising and authenticating function of the author’s name – whoever they may be – is not necessary for the purposes of the performance (non-operative ‘author-function’, §1.3.4). All these aspects, which do not reflect determined contexts of origin and production, but depend on modes of use and perception, define the genre of folksong. As a result, the folk genre does not appear as a fixed textual category in complete opposition to literature. On the contrary, my conceptualisation implies that the same text, when used and perceived according to folkloric modalities in specific performative scenarios, can also be studied from literary perspectives across different contexts of analysis and reception.

In Chapters 2 to 4, I reassessed a selection of the *carmina popularia* in light of these conceptual and methodological considerations. A formal analysis of the material was also carried out upon examples where I saw evidence of concrete results that fit into my larger theoretical framework. I showed that there are no linguistic, stylistic and grammatical traits that characteristically define the genre of folksong. Rather, formal features can sometimes indicate specific modes of use and consumption. My study has not only sought to understand what the texts in question really represented in their own performative contexts, but also to clarify the kind of reception each has enjoyed in the scholarship of ancient times.

More specifically, Chapters 2 and 3 explored the begging- and work-song traditions of ancient Greece. Of course, these traditions can be interpreted according to folkloric modalities of use and consumption: both begging and work songs are indeed performed and thus perceived as specific, practical activities (the ritual act of *quête* and the various work routines, respectively). Still, the same texts reveal an aesthetic and expressive potential that was adopted, read and discussed in ancient scholarly discourse from very different (literary) perspectives. This confirms that begging and work songs are not ‘folk’ in and of themselves: their status changes depending on how they are used and perceived.

Chapter 2 examined the Rhodian *chelidonisma* (PMG 848) in comparison to four other texts related to the practice of begging. In antiquity, these texts had been part, to different degrees, of a process of textualisation, whereby they were considered as literary texts, with a



primary focus lying on their intrinsic formal properties and their respective contexts of origin and composition. Such considerations do not undermine the folkloric status of *PMG* 848. On the contrary, they shed light on the fact that the view of the *chelidonisma* as a folk song performed by the Rhodian children in order to carry out the annual begging for food and alms, and the view of the same song as a fixed, textualised poem, and so discussed from literary perspectives, are not in a state of conflict.

Chapter 3 pointed out that work songs are thematically fluid because they constitute a genre in terms of performative context. That is to say that potentially any kind of song used for/during work is a work song. This led us to analyse two contexts more specifically. First, I discussed the case of a religious-cum-work song (*PMG* 849), which represents a reapers' song in honour of Demeter. As such, *PMG* 849 could be both used as a work song within a work context of performance – but still relating to the cult of the goddess (i.e. harvesting) – and as a hymn to Demeter proper outside that specific context. Second, I showed how a song that is thematically a work song (*PMG* 869: a grinding song) can become something else (such as a sympotic/literary song) once removed from its original performative context. These scenarios, along with a comparative analysis with other work-song traditions of both ancient and modern times, demonstrate that 'work song' cannot be interpreted as a well-defined textual category. In order not to overlook the intrinsic fluidity and variety of the (folkloric) genre, a correct analysis needs to bestow primacy on the contexts of use and consumption over the criteria of form.

Finally, in Chapter 4, I applied my conceptualisation of folksong to a series of cult and ritual songs also included in the *carmina popularia* (*PMG* 847, 851, 854, 860, 862, 864, 868, 870, 871). The folkloric status of these texts has never been properly discussed: labels such as 'folk' or *populare* have generally been attached to indicate primitive or pre-literary forms of lyric poetry. I highlighted, in quite the opposite direction, the strict relationship in terms of style and language between these texts and those which are considered nowadays part of the literary canon of ancient Greece. Moreover, I showed that, in at least three cases (*PMG* 847, 851b, 862), classical or post-classical compositions can be identified. My conceptualisation, however, allows us to analyse the texts at issue as folk songs regardless of their contexts of origin and production, in other words, not necessarily as lowbrow and primordial forms of poetry.

The scope of research on folklore and folksong in antiquity is not exhausted by the texts and issues raised in this dissertation. First of all, other texts included in the *carmina popularia*

remain to be taken into account.<sup>2</sup> Their use, consumption and reception, as well as their relationship with texts that do not appear in the same collection, are all elements that deserve to be further investigated. For example, one can compare the paeon sung in Samos in honour of Lysander (*carm. pop. PMG* 867) with other songs dedicated to political figures of ancient Greece, such as the one sung by the women of Andania to celebrate the return of the Messenian Army General Aristomenes,<sup>3</sup> the hymn to Demetrios Poliorcetes performed in Athens (cf. §4.1.1 n. 35), and the paeon to Titus Flamininus sung at Chalcis to commemorate his death.<sup>4</sup> We have evidence of the later reperformance for all these texts.<sup>5</sup> And interestingly, both the song for Aristomenes and the hymn to Demetrius – which are both excluded from the reference edition of Page (*PMG*) – were nevertheless included in some earlier editions of the *carmina popularia*.<sup>6</sup> A question spontaneously arises from this: can these texts, or at least some of them, be considered from folkloric perspectives? And if so, in what sense and with what implications?

The thrust of my argument in this thesis also has implications for the Latin-speaking world. Modern collections of fragmentary Latin poetry include sections or subsections devoted to the so-called *versus populares*.<sup>7</sup> Under this label, an heterogenous range of materials appears:

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. e.g. further ritual formulas (*PMG* 877, a formula of the Eleusinian mysteries, and 879, a torch-bearer's formula for the Lenaia) and cult songs (*PMG* 872, a refrain of a hymn to Aphrodite); two 'paeans' (*PMG* 858 and 867); love songs (*PMG* 850, 853, 873); war songs (*PMG* 856 and 857); proverbial motifs (*PMG* 855, 874, 883).

<sup>3</sup> After his defeat of the Spartans in the Second Messenian War. The song is transmitted in Paus. 4.16.6.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted by Plut. *Flamininus* 16.6-7 (p. 173 Pow.). See Rutherford 2001: 57f. (on *PMG* 867 as well); D'Alessio 2017: 257. A paeon-refrain occurs in both *PMG* 867 (ὦ ἱὲ Παϊάν) and the hymn to Titus (ἰήϊε Παϊάν).

<sup>5</sup> On the hymn to Demetrius, cf. Ath. 6.253f. ταῦτ' ἦδον οἱ Μαραθωνομάχαι οὐ δημοσίᾳ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ κατ' οἰκίαν. As for the other two songs, Plutarch and Pausanias respectively describe them as still performed in their own times (Plut. *Flam.* 16.6 ἔτι δὲ καὶ καθ' ἡμᾶς κτλ., Paus. 4.16.6 ἐπέλεγον ἄσμα τὸ καὶ ἐς ἡμᾶς ἔτι ᾄδόμενον).

<sup>6</sup> On the former, see *carm. pop.* 42 Edmonds = 5 Diehl = 28 Bergk<sup>3,4</sup> = 22 Bergk<sup>2</sup> = 15 Bergk<sup>1</sup>. On the latter, see *carm. pop.* 27 Smyth = 46 Bergk<sup>3,4</sup> = 34 Bergk<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, *PMG* 867 is not included in the editions of Diehl (1925) and Edmonds (1940).

<sup>7</sup> Just to quote two of the most recent editions, see the *versus populares* in Courtney (1993: 470-482) and the *versiculi populares et pueriles* in Blänsdorf (2011: 413f.). In Blänsdorf's edition, there are also subsections of *versus populares*, generally of a mocking nature, on specific historical figures (e.g. the *versus populares in Caesarem* and *in Augustum*), which Courtney includes in his only 'popular' section or in different sections such as the *versus triumphales*. On the importance of these and similar texts for the study of fragmentary Latin poetry, see Pieri 2016: 12 ('occorre riconoscere che lo scopo di una raccolta come i *FPL* [*scil. Fragmenta Poetarum*

e.g. nursery rhymes, *carmina rustica*, proverbs, soldiers' songs, anonymous lampoons, and so on. These texts raise similar issues to those addressed in the current dissertation with regard to the *carmina popularia*, starting from the genesis itself of the collection.

A concluding thought concerns the comparative approach with modernity. My approach represents a cross-cultural conceptualisation of folksong. For this reason, I have sometimes adopted examples from the contemporary world not so much as evidence for supposedly unchanging and continuous song traditions – a parameter often used to describe the relation between ancient and modern Greek traditions – but to show how song performances closer to our time can help us understand similar aspects of use and perception that were also valid in antiquity. The comparative approach with modernity can be further explored and, even if through the necessary adjustments, can greatly enrich the interpretation of ancient folklore.

Studying folklore has proven itself to be far from an enclosed and independent discipline that examines ready-made sets of cultural items in determined social settings. A folkloric approach that is free from those conceptual and theoretical shortcomings highlighted above represents an invaluable tool indeed for understanding how people (or folk groups) appropriate cultural artifacts such as song-texts in various cultures and at various levels. In this sense, the study of ancient Greek folksong illustrates how certain texts, which cannot *a priori* be distinguished from the literary tradition, could be used and perceived in the everyday performative experiences of antiquity.

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*Latinorum*] è anche documentario e che un criterio tanto restrittivo finirebbe per escludere 'testi' comunque interessanti come ad esempio i cosiddetti *carmina popularia*').

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### 1.0 Abbreviations

The abbreviations for ancient authors and books follow the criteria employed in *OCD*<sup>4</sup> or, if not present there, in *LSJ*<sup>9</sup>.

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Campbell (*PMG* 847-883) = Campbell 1993: 232-269.

Diehl (nos. 1-53) = Diehl 1925: 192-208.

Edmonds (nos. 1-42) = Edmonds 1940: 508-548.

Neri (nos. 1-37) = Neri 2003: 200-255.

*PMG* 847-883 (Page) = Page 1962: 450-470.

Schneidewin (nos. 21-33) = Schneidewin 1839: 461-467.

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Bergk = Bergk<sup>1+2+3+4</sup>.

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Kaibel = Kaibel 1887.

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